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INTRODUCTORY TO THE

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THE
CHART AND SCALE
OF
T R U T H,

BY WHICH TO FIND

THE CAUSE OF ERROR.

L E C T U R E S

READ BEFORE THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AT THE LECTURE

FOUNDED BY

The Rev. JOHN BAMPTON, M. A.

By EDWARD TATHAM, D. D.

V O L. II.

Pro certo habeant homines non sectæ nos alicujus aut placiti, sed utilitatis & amplitudinis humanæ fundamenta moliri.

Baconus De Augm. Scient. Præf.

O X F O R D :

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THE
CHART AND SCALE
OF
T R U T H,
BY WHICH
TO FIND THE CAUSE
OF
E R R O R.

Of the Logic of THEOLOGY.

TO this general Chart of Truth, Speculative, Practical, and Poetical, I come now to add another and farther province: a province superior in its origin, more universal in its comprehension, and more important in its use; in which the INTELLECT,
VOL. II. B the

2. *The Chart and Scale*

the WILL, and the IMAGINATION, have all the fullest and sublimest exercise.

In this province, truth does not spring from any *Material subject* in the compass of the universe, or from the *Mind of man* in its operations and effects, as in those which have been discussed; but from another and much higher source, the *Mind or Will of God*, more immediately and directly dispensed, than by the ordinary administration of his providence: And, as it is derived from the divinest origin, it has in view the noblest end—the *immortal happiness* of man^a.

This is a field of knowledge productive of a species of truth which, logically considered, is more different from the kinds that have been analyzed and arranged in the preceding volume, than any of them are from each other, constituting the science of a THEOLOGY, with which Aristotle was entirely unacquainted: but, as Reason is more directly or indirectly concerned with all truth that relates to man, this species, however superior

^a See p. 126, 217, 268, of the first volume.

and

and divine, has a Logic appropriated to itself, as well as the other sciences; which comes now to be analyzed and arranged, according to the *Rule* laid down in the fifth chapter of the former volume.

To give a philosophical delineation of this other Logic, by distinguishing its *Principle*, by illustrating its proper *Method of Reasoning*, and by ascertaining the particular nature and genius of the *Truth* resulting from the whole, is the main object of my present undertaking. For the sake of displaying more clearly and adequately to view the province of Theology, this general Chart of the different kinds of learning was first projected, and the parallel drawn between the logic appropriated to each; in the humble but sanguine hope, that, from such an enlarged and comparative estimate, it may receive the strongest and distinctest light, that its study may be facilitated if not improved, that its truths, being weighed in an equal and impartial Scale, may have their full and proper value, and that its superior excellence may be more evidently ascertained: which plan, if executed with success, pro-

mises to lay the deepest and broadest bottom, on which *to ground and establish the Christian Faith* ^b.

The departments of learning, which have been the subject of the preceding lectures, are properly *human*: this which comes now to be discussed and illustrated by a comparison with them, is properly *divine*. From a logical and comprehensive knowledge of the different branches of human learning, the student will bring a strength and cultivation of mind, and a clearness of comprehension, to his theology, which will abridge his labour and ensure his success, in every part of his sublime profession. Instead of being perplexed by a mixture and confusion of different studies, the bane of all proficiency in good learning; he will know how to adapt and improve them to his advantage. Instead of being embarrassed by an intrusion of subjects from other parts of knowledge, which defeat his reasoning or disconcert his train of thinking; from a logical acquaintance with all, he will see

^b See p. 76, of first volume.

where

where the distinction lies, and be able to apply each, in its proper use, to the great object of his enquiry. Instead of wandering from one difficulty to another, in the midst of partial and indigested information, as in a maze of error which is increased by an indiscriminate glare of light, he will move on with ease and safety, in the serenity of a clear and comprehensive mind. Prejudice, which, in narrow conceptions, is always so inveterate and often so invincible, will give place to candour: whilst all partial and minute objections will be lost in enlarged and extensive views. The theological student will found the principles of his science on their just and philosophical basis, distinguishing them from those of every other; and, after pursuing that method of investigation which is naturally adapted to them, without deviating into any other, he will embrace, with a manly and reasonable assent, the stupendous truths of a sublime religion. Those which he can comprehend, he will enjoy with gratitude; and those, which are above his conception, he will adore in profounder admiration.

But, to derive this ease and advantage to his studies from such a comparative estimate of theology with the other parts of learning, he is to be apprized, that some labour and attention are to be previously employed. To read with care, to think with candour, to judge with impartiality, and to determine for himself, are the first and leading qualifications of the theological student. Many and various comparisons are to be formed between one science and another, in all their correspondent parts; and that of Theology is to be compared with every other. To make these comparisons with accuracy and success, he will see the necessity of a competent acquaintance with the circle of the sciences being previously formed. He will discover, that, to do justice to this exalted and extensive field of knowledge, which is the object of his cultivation, it is not enough to read over, on the one hand, the bulky folios of school-divinity with a dronish and befotted industry, embracing whatever is advanced with an implicit assent; nor, on the other, to run through the gilded volumes of our modern sermonizers, which

which are calculated to relieve him from the trouble of thinking, and the labour of attention, and to kill an idle hour in all the ease of an indolent straight-forward reading. The study of Theology is both learned and laborious, and requires, more than any other, an independant and active mind. And whoever shall honour these volumes with a perusal, their author presumes to request, that he will take nothing on the authority of the writer, or depend upon his judgment, but examine every thing and judge for himself; that he will do him the favour not to read them over in an indolent straight-forward way, with a view to be entertained, (in which he will be miserably disappointed); but that he will look back to different parts of the parallel, and compare them together; that he will examine with freedom, and correct with candour: and, as a fellow-labourer in the commonwealth of learning, their author will engage, on his part, to accept of all improvements with gratitude, and to adopt them with simplicity.

With sentiments of deepest awe and reverence, I enter upon the province of sacred

B 4

truth,

truth, which, though protected, as it ought to be, from outrage and open violence, by the civil power, is always to maintain its authority over the minds of men, by its own inherent worth and native evidence. This exalted province is not the less perplexed in all its parts, nor rendered the less difficult in its arrangement and discussion, by the number and diversity of champions, who, one after another, have taken this consecrated ground. The society of the learned, in this as well as in all other departments, may be divided into two classes: the one consisting of a *few*; the other of a *many*. The former are those bold and enterprising geniuses, who advance before their fellows in the road of science, in the invention of truth, and in the formation of system. The latter follow behind at a humble distance, content with the inferior praise of admiring and elucidating their steps, without attempting to advance beyond them; patronizing their inventions, espousing their opinions, and adopting their errors^c. The former,

^c “ Those which give themselves to follow and imitate
 “ others, were in all things so observant sectators of their
 “ masters, whom they admired and believed in, as they
 “ thought

former, who are naturally capable, becoming too soon wedded to their own systems and inventions, from which they are unwilling to depart, are rendered by their success, at length, unable to proceed in the advancement of knowledge: and a peasant from the plough, with a strong and active mind undebauched by system, is a fairer candidate in the field of literature, than those sages of the second class with all the parade of learning without any of the power.

Without affecting to dictate on the one hand, or implicitly to follow on the other, but soliciting to be examined and improved on all, as I have done in the departments of human learning, I must here also beg leave of systematical divines, without any disrespect or contempt for their labours, to claim the privilege of a free adventurer in the search of truth, and to treat this great argument of Theology in my own way. Though truth may be most easily and frequently found

“ thought it safer to condemn their own understandings, than to examine them,” is an observation of the great Raleigh on the learned men of his time.

Hist. of the World, Chap. iii. § 1.

in

in the broad and beaten path, and not the less to be valued because overtaken in the common road ; yet, by following each other in the same unvaried track of formal cultivation, with a sacred care never to deviate from it, philosophers, both divine and human, confirm many errors, without improving any truths : and though, in the other mode of proceeding, errors are perhaps more liable to be incurred, they will be soon detected ; and, from the ease and liberality which it professes, no sooner detected than abandoned.

THEOLOGY is the queen of sciences. To this all the other parts of learning should minister and subserve : “ the virgins that be her fellows should bear her company,” to cultivate the understanding, and to prepare the heart, for this sublimer application. To train the mind in the gradual search of knowledge ; to raise it from one subject to another, as it gathers strength ; to direct its progression from science to science ; to facilitate and enlarge its comprehension, whilst the exercise of its faculties is confined within the sphere

sphere of their distinct and proper action ; to know its capacity and extent when stretched out to their utmost reach ; and, above all, to rest contented in the virtuous fruition of truth, whatever it may be, or however found, is that philosophic discipline of their diviner part, in which mortals may repose their pride and honour. Whilst it raises the intellect to the summit of all knowledge, it subdues the will to virtue, and engages the imagination in the support and ornament of both ; and, by an useful culture, prepares the mind, as a bridal chamber, for the reception and entertainment of those diviner truths, which will exalt that honour into a more permanent and substantial glory.

C H A P. I.

Of the Theological PRINCIPLE, and its
Effect upon the Mind.

THE kinds of Truth, which form the several departments of human learning belonging to the different provinces of the Theoretic, the Practic, and the Poetic, mind, are the inferences and deductions of natural Reason from principles existing in the nature and constitution of subjects, material or mental, to which they respectively relate*.

And thus a *part* of that truth, which in the divine Mind is *universal*, and *intuitive*, is, by the use of Sense and Reason, conveyed *progressively* into the human; where it exists

* See p. 66 of the first vol.

according

according to the nature of the subjects from which it is derived, and in *proportion* to the Mind in which it is^b.

But truth, as hath been observed, is originally of the nature and essence of God^c; an attribute of his omniscient mind^d. Infinite regions and volumes of truth must, therefore, lie reposed in that universal and unbounded intellect, which sees all things without a medium, out of the reach of our senses to apprehend, our reason to investigate, or our best faculties to conceive; both for want of principles, and for want of mind.

If the *natural* operations of the Deity, which are the exertions of his Power, governing and disposing the material system of the universe by the instrumentality of second causes, form a labyrinth of dark and difficult investigation to human reason; if, after our ablest and most successful researches, many of the works of nature are only partially discovered, and some remain totally concealed^e: the *moral* dispensa-

^b See p. 12, 13, of the first vol.

^c Ibid. p. 6.

^d Ibid. p. 10.

^e Ibid. p. 186.

tions flowing from his Wisdom, that more mysterious attribute, which are more immediately administered by an act of his omniscient mind, and removed from the observation of external sense, must form a system of more dark and mysterious contrivance, unfathomable in its sublimer parts as the profundity of his will. All the parts of this profounder dispensation, which lie out of the reach of the human faculties, if they are ever made the subject of our knowledge, must be derived into the mind from a principle or ground of evidence, different both from *External* and *Internal Sense*, and communicated by an instrument different from that of Reason.

Our great philosopher, whose clear and comprehensive mind arranged the departments and marked the confines of all learning, has distinguished this *Principle* of divine knowledge from those of human by a general division.

‘ All knowledge is allotted a twofold information; the one originating from *Sense*,

‘ the other from *Inspiration*.’ And this dis-

† Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. iii. cap. 1.

tinction,

tion, so essential to the true foundation of Theology, is made by another, who excels him as much in divinity of thought, as in sublimity of expression. “Hardly do we
“guess aright at the things that are upon
“the earth, and with labour do we find the
“things that are before us: but the things
“that are in heaven who hath searched out,
“or thy counsel who hath known; except
“thou give Wisdom, and send thy Holy
“Spirit from above?”

Some few individuals of the human species have been so dark in understanding, so preposterous in judgment, or so perverse in reasoning, as to call in question the possibility of this divine communication: and they have been so impertinently absurd, as to demand the formal demonstration of an universal truth, which is one of those that (if I may so speak) demonstrates itself by resulting immediately from the existence of God. To doubt of this important truth, is to insult their maker by doubting of his power, and by denying that he, who gave men sense and

* Wisdom, chap. ix. 16, 17.

reason, the only means by which natural knowledge is acquired, cannot convey to them knowledge in another and different way.

“ He that planted the ear, shall he not
 “ hear? He that formed the eye, shall he
 “ not see^a? He that made the mouthⁱ,
 “ shall he not speak? And he that framed
 “ the mind, shall he not teach man know-
 “ ledge^k? ”

Appointed the lords and sovereigns of the whole visible creation, and distinguished with many divine and extraordinary gifts; admitted, by the information of the external and internal sense, to the possession of so much knowledge, speculative and practical; and thought worthy of the still higher favour, to be taken into a near connection with the supreme lord and governor of the universe, by being constituted his moral subjects accountable to him; He, who hath bestowed upon men these supereminent prerogatives, who has endowed their understanding with the power of drawing so much knowledge from principles in nature, and of communicating

^a Psalm xciv. 9. ⁱ Exodus iv. 11. ^k Ps. xciv. 10.

it to each other by human intercourse; He, who hath given them the still diviner prerogative of the will, can, out of the treasures of his wisdom, impart to them other and sublimer truths by his supernatural communication, for the employment of that understanding, and for the exercise of that will. Who may presume to wonder, that He, who is the fountain of all truth, should communicate to his moral agents such portions of it, as their reason cannot deduce from those material and mental subjects with which it is connected; particularly when he can enlighten the willing mind, and prepare it for their reception and improvement? His omniscience knows the necessities of his moral agents created for happiness and enjoyment, his goodness is always ready to supply them, and no one can doubt his power: “for the
“ greatness of his mercy reacheth unto the
“ heavens, and his truth unto the clouds¹.”

The possibility and probability of supernatural communication being so far established,

¹ Psalm xlvii. 11.

VOL. II.

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let

let us next enquire into the proper *nature* and *constitution* of this supernatural information, which forms the Principle of Theology.

When Mago arrived at the gates of Carthage, charged by the victorious general with the important embassy of the defeat of the Romans in the battle of Cannæ, though they did not themselves witness the truth of that great event, the whole senate entertained the welcome news on the relation of the brother of Hannibal; and, on his pouring out the rings of the Roman knights, who fell in that bloody action, in the vestibule of their house, they were fully confirmed of the truth of the intelligence, and absolutely convinced of the important fact^m. And, when Columbus, on his arrival in the western hemisphere, told the Indians that the ships in which he had sailed over the Atlantic, were made by men, though they could have no conception how such vast and complicated machines were built, they gave credit to this truth on the word of that celebrated navigator. Had these different facts not been credited by the in-

^m Livy, lib. xxiii. cap. 11, 12.

formed,

formed, their mistrust or disbelief could have made them no less true. They were, however, credited by both parties on the authority of their informants: in the first instance, by men who were capable of understanding clearly the nature of the victory of Hannibal, and how it was accomplished, from the narration of his brother: and, in the second, by men, who were incapable of comprehending the complex and artful construction of an European ship, or of conceiving how it could be erected by human means. And, whether the nature of the facts related were understood or not by the informed, was also a circumstance, which did not in the least affect their positive truth. They were entertained and credited alike on the testimony of others; and they were both equally true.

In similar circumstances are all men placed, from the condition of their nature, in regard to most of the truths which affect human life and action. Confined within narrow limits of time and place, possessed of different degrees of knowledge and information, and, indeed, of different capacity and reach of understanding for their acquisition,

they are of necessity obliged, in every sphere and scene of life, to rely on the credit and veracity of each other, and to receive the largest and the most useful proportion of truth, of many kinds, from information and tradition. These are the most general and extensive sources or means of truth; and, whether they are capable of understanding it or not, men are obliged to found upon it the most important thought and the most eventful conduct. By this light they have been led from age to age; and never have had reason to complain that they have been led wrong. If such be the credit and authority of men, so extensive and infallible, as the experience of every one must convince him, in regard to many of the most interesting and important truths; how properly, and how pointedly does the reasoning of the inspired Apostle, enforcing the authority of a divine communication, come home to our self-conviction?—"If ye receive the witness of men; the witness of God is greater".

The nature of *Testimony*, as a principle of truth, has been stated and discussed in the

* 1 John v. 9.

first

first volume°, where it was found to operate with more universality and extent than any other, being a general vehicle by which truths of every kind were communicated and conveyed: and if we will make use of the clue held out to us by the Apostle, which leads us from earthly to heavenly things, reason will conduct us safely by a close and obvious analogy, (the only logic by which divine truths can be conveyed to men), from this human principle to the divine: from this testimony of men, from which is derived the greatest share of natural or human truth, to the TESTIMONY OF GOD, which is the source and vehicle of those truths which are supernatural or divine, and which, being communicated by the word of God, are *Theologic*.

All truth, whether natural or supernatural, proceeds alike from God, only in different ways, and by different dispensations. However various in appearance and multiplex in form, it is connected, like all his works, by a wonderful and consistent chain, one main link of which, is this Principle of TESTIMONY which is common to

• Chap. x.

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both;

both ; by which an easy and familiar transition is made from truths that are human to those that are divine. Whether the Almighty act through the instrumentality of his creatures, or more immediately by himself ; whether he convey truth to the minds of men through the natural organs of the senses, or by a supernatural communication of his will, he is always uniform and consistent with himself : and one part of his divine government is made introductory to another, and illustrative of its œconomy. Thus earthly things are the expressive types and resemblances of heavenly, on which resemblance a sublime *Analogy* is founded, which is the great instrument of Theologic Truth ; and it is upon reasoning by this analogy from human Testimony to divine, that its Principle is constituted.

“ Such is the true nature and foundation of that *Logic*, which is peculiarly appropriated to subjects of Theology, and which has had the sanction and approbation of Him, who is its origin, its instrument, and end. “ Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and “ Sidon : and behold a woman of Canaan “ came

“ came out of the same coasts, and cried
 “ unto him, saying, Have mercy on me,
 “ O Lord, thou son of David, my daughter
 “ is grievously vexed with a devil.—But he
 “ answered and said, it is not meet to take
 “ the children’s bread and to cast it to
 “ the dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord:
 “ yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall
 “ from their master’s table.” This answer
 made to his allusive observation of the *children’s bread*, possessed a quality so singularly
 excellent; as to extort from him an animated
 eulogium, accompanied with a grant of her
 request; “ O woman, great is thy faith! be
 “ it unto thee even as thou wilt^p.” This
 answer, so highly applauded and honoured by
 our Lord, was the result of reasoning by *Ana-*
logy,—That as the dogs eat of the crumbs of
 the master’s table, after the children are sup-
 plied and satisfied; so she, though an alien
 from the house of Israel, and not entitled to
 the first overtures of his grace, might hope
 for some small portion of his superabundant
 favour, after the children of that house were
 served: and, upon this rational ground, sprung

^p Matth. xv. 21. &c.

the excellency of her faith. And we have another very singular instance upon record of the same high approbation accorded to this mode of reasoning, and to the effect which it produced. "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled and said unto the people, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith no not in Israel." This sublime wonder of our Lord was, doubtless, excited by the centurion's arguing, from parity of reasoning, that, as he

* Matth. viii. 5, &c.

* Luke vii. 8, 9.

himself,

himself, whose power was infinitely inferior to Christ's, was vested with an authority by which he could execute his intention without going in person; so our Lord's divine and supernatural power was so great, that he could heal diseases at a distance, as well as at hand.

These passages of sacred story are singular and important. From their conviction of the truth of his divine authority founded on *analogic reasoning*, the author of our religion pronounced the faith of the parties to be more excellent than any other: and if to these instances of such marked and decided approbation, we add the numerous parables, similitudes, and analogies, which he employed on all occasions to convey his supernatural truths to men, we may conclude that this method of reasoning is specially consecrated to the service of religion.

Upon this analogic reasoning the great Principle of all Theology is founded: "If we receive," saith the Apostle, "the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." From the nature of divine Testimony it lays hold of the mind of man, only by its analogy to human. "This is the witness of God, which

“ which he has testified of his Son :” and accordingly, “ he that believeth on the Son,” as the Apostle argues, “ hath the witness,” the prototype and principle of the evidence, “ within himself.”

In his kingdoms both of Nature and of Grace, the God of all truth is wonderfully consistent in the mode of its dispensation ; and *Analogy* is the instrument of reason, by which, in one as well as in the other, man is enabled to ascend from earth to heaven. From the curves and motions of *projectiles*, we have seen the astronomer rising, by a sublime analogy, to those of the *celestial bodies** ; just as we see the theologist rising from the *testimony of men* to the *testimony of God* : and as those stupendous orbs, rolling in silent majesty through the vast regions of space, are infinitely more exalted and sublime than the projectiles by which they are illustrated and explained ; so this divine Testimony, which is conveyed to the apprehension of men, and made a principle of reasoning, by its analogy

* John iii. 10, 11.

† See p. 155, 156 of the first volume.

to human, is infinitely superior, more exalted, and sublime, in proportion as God, in knowledge, fidelity, and all perfection, is superior to man: for "the witness of God is greater." The word of such a witness must be invincible in power, and paramount to every thing which does not involve a palpable contradiction.

The Theological Principle being thus founded and explained, let us next observe its *operation* and *effect* upon the mind.

That all reasoning is from principles of one kind or another, and that the method which it pursues is governed by the principles, and is productive of a species of truth exactly correspondent and proportioned to both", is that logical doctrine, which this general Chart would illustrate and enforce in every part of learning. On comparing the Theological Principle with those which have been severally delineated in the preceding volume, in order to weigh the specific operation and effect

* See page 30, and 66 of the first volume.

of each in the just Scale of truth, it will be found to differ more from them all, in its logical nature and *operation*, than any of them do from each other; constituting a new light or inlet of knowledge: and it may, consequently, be expected to produce a different *effect* upon the mind, and that its truths will command a species of *assent* peculiar to themselves.

All other parts of knowledge are derived into the understanding, primarily from the *Senses external or internal*, or secondarily from the *Testimony of men*, and are called *natural*: theologic is derived from the immediate impression, or communication, of the Deity, called *Inspiration*; and, as distinguished from them, is *supernatural*. In the former cases, Reason begins its operation with particular truths, and rises, by a laborious inductive process, to general conclusions; which are the secondary principles, to be applied, by a different operation, to the proof of particular truths. In the latter case, Reason has no manner of concern with the truths at all, which spring immediately of themselves from the divine inspiration.

piration *. If office consists only in the *proof* of that Inspiration from those internal and external evidences which it abundantly contains; and which, though inseparably interwoven with it, are to be considered as totally distinct and separate from the truths themselves. When the fact of Inspiration is thus proved, the divine Testimony, which is the Principle of all Theology, results immediately from it: and as, on the one hand, in establishing the Principle, reason has no direct concern; so, on the other, it has nothing to do in deducing them from it by any process whatever *. They are said to be *revealed*; and, as far as they are revealed, they flow from the Principle of themselves, without the formality of deduction of any kind, and convince the mind, without any other authority, than the bare credit of the witness; being *implicitly*

* In rebus naturalibus ipsa principia examini subjiiciuntur per inductionem, licet minime per syllogismum; atque eadem illa nullam habent cum natione repugnantiam, ut ab eadem fonte tum primæ propositiones tum mediæ deducantur. Aliter fit in religione, ubi & primæ propositiones authypostatæ sunt, atque per se subsistentes.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ix. cap. i.

* Et rursus non reguntur ab ulla ratione, quæ propositiones consequentes deducit. Ibid.

to

to be received, without any operation of the mind about them, upon the *Word* of God*. Whether they are revealed more fully or more partially, they are to be believed, as far as they are revealed, without our even attempting to throw any farther light upon them of our own: for "his thoughts are not as our thoughts," and who may dare either to question or to super-add to the truths by him communicated; whether, like the Carthaginian senate, we may be able, or think ourselves able, to comprehend them; or, with the benighted Indians, we be unable to form any conception of them at all; since He who hath revealed them, knew for what purpose they were designed, and in what proportion they were to be given; since he is totally free

* Prærogativa Dei totum hominem complectitur; nec minus ad rationem quam ad voluntatem humanam extenditur: ut homo in universum se abneget & accedat Deo. Quare sicut legi divinæ obedire tenemur, licet reluctetur voluntas: illa & *verbo Dei* fidem habere, licet reluctetur ratio. Etenim si ea duntaxat credamus quæ sunt rationi consentanea, rebus assentimur non auctori; quod etiam suspectæ fidei testibus præstare solemus.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. iii. cap. i.

from

from error, and equally incapable of fraud or falsehood?

So that, contrary to its proceeding in the kinds of knowledge which are natural, in Theology, reason has nothing to do with the truths of revelation, either in the proper formation of their general Principle in the first place, or in judging of them as they are derived from it in the second: for “*Faith*,” or the conviction they produce, cometh not by reasoning, but by “hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Their *Principle* subsists and terminates in itself: like its author, it is alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

This celestial Principle, the TESTIMONY OF GOD, is not only totally different from *mathematical, physical*, and all other *axioms*; but also from the principle of *human Testimony*, from its analogy to which it first takes possession of the mind, in that, as was observed, it is infinitely more excellent and superior in power. With an allusion to Testimony in general, as founded on the authority of witnesses, the Baptist, who, as the morn-

’ Rom. x. 17.

ing-star

ing-star is the harbinger of natural, was appointed the immediate messenger of this supernatural, light, has displayed it in terms the most magnificent. "He that cometh from above, is above all. He that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven, is above all; and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth." In the same inspired and exalted strain, he proceeds to urge the transcendent authority of this testimony. "He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true; for He that God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spirit by measure to him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands²." And this authority is enforced upon the minds of men by the beloved apostle, with a power which is invincible. "This is the witness of God, which he testifieth of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record which God gave

² John iii. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

" of

“ of his Son.” He then proceeds to state, in a few plain words, the stupendous substance of this Record or TESTIMONY, which is, “ That God hath given us eternal life;” and “ that this life is in his Son.”—The END and the MEANS of religion: the end worthy of HIM, by whom it was designed: and the means worthy of HIM, by whom they were executed.

Thus Theologic *Truth* will be different from every other kind; and its *effect* upon the mind will be proportioned to the divine authority, and transcendent superiority, of its Principle.

Compared with the several kinds which have been analyzed in the preceding volume, how totally different will this be found, in its constitution and operation upon the mind? Though, in power and conviction, it be equal to mathematical conclusions, it is the very reverse of them: for, whereas they are the deductions from general principles by a train of reasoning the most syllogistic, elaborate, and extensive of any other, this results from

* I John v. 9; for * I John v. 11.

D

its

34 *The Chart and Scale*

its principle without a single act of judgment. And, as all other kinds of truth which we call *natural*, claim an assent in proportion to the nature of their principles and mode of reasoning; *supernatural* truths, when their principle is established on the independent evidences, command an assent proportionable to itself, without any reasoning at all: for “he that believeth,” as the apostle affirms, “hath the witness in himself;” if his mind admit the witness, it must *immediately* admit the truth;—an assent distinguished by the name of FAITH, which is absolute and implicit, independent of all the powers of the Understanding, the Will, or the Imagination; and with which Reason has no direct concern, but to instruct them with all diligence and alacrity to embrace the truth, and in all virtue and humility to acquiesce.

The truths which are the objects of this faith, are, therefore, distinguished from all other kinds by the name of *Mysteries*. But, as in advancing from truth to truth, we have observed the mind proceeding through a regularly ascending scale, beginning with the lowest and rising higher and higher as it advances;

vances ; so in condescension to their natural desire, and to invite men to the enjoyment of the sublimest truths, the dispenser of these mysteries hath made some of them to stoop ; or to seem to stoop, to the level of their comprehensions ; whilst others, by their sublimity, reach up into the heaven from which they came, and are awfully lost to all human sight in the clouds and darkness, which surround his seat.

On those mysteries which are revealed with so much clearness, as to be put within the comprehension of the human mind, (though to discover them at first was out of the province of reason, whatever fitness she may find in them when once revealed,) and which seem to be the connecting link between the little we are allowed to know, and the much from which we are excluded, we may worthily employ our thoughts. Reason may explain them with simplicity, without prying into them with too presumptive a curiosity, or giving them more light than the inspirer hath given*. She may contemplate them with

* *Humanae rationis usus, in rebus ad religionem spectantibus, duplex est : alter in explicatione mysterii ; alter in illuminationibus,*

36 *The Chart and Scale*

with reverence, from a view of the Justice and Goodness of the Deity displayed in their dispensation, and illustrate them by inferences and illations, rather than dive into his secret counsel to decide upon their fitness with too determined a precision^d. On those which lie out of the sphere of his most enlarged conception,

illationibus, quæ inde deducuntur. Quod ad mysteriorum explicationem attinet, videmus non dedignare Deum ad infirmitatem caput nostri se demittere; mysteria sua ita explicando, ut a nobis optime ea possint percipi; atque revelationes suas in rationis nostræ syllepses & notiones velut inoculando; atque inspirationes ad intellectum nostrum aperiendum sic accommodando, quemadmodum figura clavis figuræ servæ. Qua tamen in parte nobis ipsis deesse minime debemus: Cum enim Deus ipse opera rationis nostræ in illuminationibus suis utatur; etiam nos eandem in omnes partes versare debemus, quo magis capaces simus ad mysteria & recipienda & bibenda; modo animus ad amplitudinem mysteriorum pro modulo suo dilatetur, non mysteria ad angustias animi constringantur.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ix.

^d Quantum vero ad illationes; nosse debemus, relinqui nobis usum rationis & ratiocinationis secundarium quendam & respectivum, non primitivum & absolutum. Postquam enim articuli & principia religionis jam in sedibus suis fuerint locata, ita ut a rationis examine eximantur;

ception, man may think with reverence, and should silently adore; not narrowing the mystery to the contraction of his mind, but enlarging the mind, as much as possible, to the amplitude of the mystery. He should view them with all the purest affection of love and admiration, from a consideration of their end; and, in humble condescension, allow them to partake of that incomprehensible Wisdom from which they flow. Reason, by an indirect and secondary operation, may draw inferences and conclusions from these deeper mysteries according to the *analogy of Faith*, which will afford her an important and extensive scope; taking care to distinguish between the authority of the inferences, and that of the principle. But the great duty of the Christian is, to regulate both his faith and conduct by the doctrines and precepts of the

tum demum conceditur ab illis illationes derivare ac deducere secundum analogiam ipsorum.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ix.

“ • Why,” faith St. Jerome, “ do you pretend, after so many ages are elapsed, to teach us what was never taught before? Why attempt to explain what neither Peter nor Paul thought it necessary to be known?”

Ad Pammach. & Ocean. de Erroribus Origenis.

D 3

Gospel

Gospel or word of God, whether enabled more or less, or not at all, to comprehend the grounds and reasons on which they stand. Acknowledging the evidence, by which they are supported as the edicts of heaven, to be satisfactory and divine, he will best approve his wisdom and gratitude to God by yielding an implicit obedience to his laws.

Amidst her admiration of the stupendous mysteries of Religion, Reason may be reconciled to her own insufficiency. They are *supernatural*; and nothing is to be found in the *compass of nature* to compare them to, in order to conclude. They are *divine*; and cannot be measured by what is human. They are as *first principles*; and with first principles reason has no concern. They who consider Reason not as the handmaid, but as the mistress, of Religion, totally mistake both her office and her power; and plunge at once into the depth of error. They do not consider that Reason is only *perception* and *judgment*; that perception is much limited in regard to many of the phænomena of nature; and that judgment in regard to many objects
upon

upon earth, thus with difficulty perceived, is often defeated, and much embarrassed in deciding upon the force of the different kinds and degrees of evidence: but “ the things which are in heaven who hath searched out ?”

They are, however, no less true, because they are mysterious. This is owing to our own imperfection, which is no bar to our assent; for the truths of Revelation are not proposed to us to *know* on the conviction of Reason, but to *believe* on the authority of “ the Spirit which beareth witness,” which he hath done, as St. John directly argues, “ because the Spirit is truth; and the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God,”

Derived from a divine original, and founded upon a principle which is most infallible, as on a rock which the power of men and angels cannot subvert or move, this supernatural Truth is THEOLOGIC; and the Faith, by which it is embraced and entertained, relating to the Son, who “ brought life and immortality to light by his gospel,” it is

20 *The Chart and Scale*

the CHRISTIAN FAITH; invisible in its object; transcendent in its power; and immortal in its end.

All other kinds of truth, springing from the evidence of external and internal sense, lie more immediately before our view, to direct our way through this material scene of things; in which we are fitly said "to walk by sight." This kind, which is to conduct us from this visible world into the world of spirits, is derived from "the evidence of things not seen," and we are accordingly commanded "to walk by faith and not by sight."—But, however *invisible* in its object, Faith is *transcendent* in its power, embracing immediately and at one grasp all the mysteries of religion, however dark and incomprehensible, independent on the faculties of man, and devoted solely to the glory of God¹.—And this transcendent virtue is exalted to still higher consideration, in that it determines the prize of *immortality*. "He

¹ Quantum mysterium aliquod divinum fuerit magis absconditum & incredibile; tanto plus credendo exhibetur honoris Deo, ut sit victoria fidei nobilior.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ix. cap. i.

"that

“ that believeth on the Son hath everlasting
 “ life; and he that believeth not the Son,
 “ shall not see life; but the wrath of God
 “ abideth on him.” In this grand catastrophe
 and consummation of human nature, from
 being militant Faith will become triumphant.
 “ Who is he,” proceeds the beloved apostle,
 in terms of confidence and triumph, “ that
 “ overcometh the world, but he that believ-
 “ eth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

Such is the nature and constitution of the
Christian Faith, which is the greatest of vir-
 tues; and which, when “ it worketh by
 “ Love,” or Christian Charity, in the pro-
 duction of *good-works* or moral virtue, the
 condition of Natural Religion, as its genuine
 fruits, is the sole and indispensable condition
 of Revealed; on the performance of which
alone, men, the moral agents, will be justi-
 fied of God, their moral governor, redeemed,
 ransomed, and rewarded, “ having their
 “ fruit unto holiness, and the end everlast-
 “ ing life.”

This

* John iii. 36.

† John v. 5, 6.

“¹ WORKS entitle us to a reward indefinitely, FAITH to
 “ the reward of *eternal life*: therefore the first step to the
 “ greater

This supernatural PRINCIPLE, so different from all others; the TRUTHS resulting from it, so different from those of every other kind, and in so different a way; and this FAITH which transcends every other species of assent, unfortunately for the true interests of Theology the queen of sciences, were unknown to Aristotle, whose Dialectic has been for ages the impregnable fort of all probable reasoning, the umpire of all learning, and the high tribunal at which the pretensions of all truth were to be tried. Thus to punish the vice and obstinacy of mankind in different periods of the world, it hath pleased the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, to suffer a cloud to be drawn across the pure light of heaven, by which it has been obstructed or obscured.

Had that great philosopher been blest with the privilege of being born after the glorious Gospel had shed its rays over the Athenian provinces: or had he partaken with the righ-

“ greater blessing must needs be a title to the lesser.” Warb. Div. Leg. Book ix. chap. 3. See the whole of this Chapter on the Doctrine of *salvation by Faith only.*

teous

teous Abraham the distinguished favour of seeing, through type, vision, or scenical representation, that future day, in which its immaculate founder sealed with his blood its immortal truths; doubtless, the patriarch and the philosopher would have rejoiced together^k. Instead of making that absurd and unphilosophical use of his works, which has been done by his blinder followers in almost every age, in the greater enlargement of his vigorous and comprehensive mind, he would have discarded the definitions, the general propositions, and the formal syllogisms, of his useless organon, to embrace immediately the Theologic Principle founded in the wisdom, and established by the power, of God^l. Instead of disputing about the stupendous mysteries resulting from this principle, or ever calling them in question, he would have placed them all upon the same divine inscrutable level, and have exclaimed at once, “ Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief^m!” Had this virtuous native of Stagyra been admitted with that of Tarsus to the further honour of foreseeing all the various opposition, which his organon, in the

^k John viii. 56.

^l 1 Cor. i. 24.

^m Mark ix. 24.

hands

hands of narrow and contracted geniuses, enslaved by terms and stupified by forms, would make, in its use and its abuse, to the truths of Christianity themselves, or rather to their reception, (for against them the gates of hell cannot prevail,) and to the establishment of their immortal principle; had he foreseen the great injury it would do in future times to “that wisdom which is from “above”; which is first *pure*,” by prophane mixtures of ‘philosophy and vain deceit’; ‘and then *peaceable*,’ by ‘ministering foolish ‘questions’,’ and fomenting rancorous disputations³: the philosopher would have lamented with the apostle, and have laboured with him to guard mankind against them. Could he have beheld certain sophists and syllogizers of the Athenian schools, disputers of

² James iii. 17.

³ Eodem etiam spectant eorum commentationes, qui veritatem Christianæ religionis ex principiis & auctoritatibus philosophorum confirmare haud veriti sunt—divinâ humanis impari conditione permiscentes. Baconi Nov. Org. lib. i.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii. 23.

⁵ Qui cum theologiam in artis formam effinxerint, hoc insuper effecerunt, ut pugnax & spinosa Aristotelis philosophia corpori religionis immisceretur. Ibid,

this

this world, insulting that great apostle with their ignorance and scorn, "What will this "babbling" say?" could he have beheld his learned commentator Simplicius, under the full light of Christianity, confirming himself in infidelity, and exulting in opposition; could he have seen the unhappy Porphyry perplexed and entangled in the subtleties of his logic, and, in the act of composing the *Isagoge*, abandoning his faith; could he have conjectured, that whilst it was raising human Reason above itself by persuading it of its all-sufficient power, his hypothetical system would lead it from the most solid truths into the endless maze of speculative error, and that this wild infatuation might inflame the sanguine and pregnant genius of a youthful emperor, and cause him to apostatize from his religion; could his eye have reached down to these distant times, and have observed the cloud of ignorance and superstition continuing to envelope the greater part of the Christian church, which the evasive versatility of his *Dialectic* was calculated to thicken and con-

* Acts xvii. 8.

firm,

46 *The Chart and Scale*

firm, rather than dispel ; and, could he have seen that part which boasts of reformation, still shackled in the pursuit of theologic truth, by its sophisms and useless disputations, and by keeping men blundering on from age to age in the thorny wilds of school-divinity :—could he have foreseen these hurtful consequences, instead of committing this part of his works to the care of the too faithful Theophrastus, the master and the scholar would have sacrificed them together upon the altar of sacred truth. And, could he have read in the book of light and life that heavenly precept “ Love your “ enemies,” he would have expunged that contrary proposition, by which his morality is disgraced, as militating against every principle of humanity and sound religion ; and he would have improved, or else abandoned his ethical system, as superseded by one infi-

“ The court of Rome well knew the importance of the School logic in supporting their authority ; they knew it could be employed more successfully in disguising error, than in vindicating truth : and Puffendorf *De Monarchia Pontificis Romani* scruples not to insinuate, that they patronized it for this very reason.’ Beattie’s Essay on Truth, p. 360.

nately

nately more perfect : whilst his theology, in which he excelled all philosophers before him, if Plato be excepted, would have soared on a sublimer wing to the heaven at which it aimed¹.

¹ See the 8th book of his Metaphysics, and the last Chapters of his Physics.

C H A P. II.

Of Theological REASONING.

HATH Reason, then, no concern at all in the establishment of Faith? and is Faith that blind virtue, which mortals are to embrace, without the consent of the Understanding?

Although Reason has no direct concern either in the act of forming the principle of theology by an inductive process, or in that of deducing from it the truths of religion by any mediate operation, or in that of proving these truths from any grounds in nature: the *Necessity* of the principle itself, of the supernatural revelation by which it was communicated to mankind, and of the stupendous mysteries which that revelation contains: these

these are topics, which have been successfully urged by the learned in divinity, from the natural infirmity of the *intellect* and the *will* of men, as from an universal fact verified in experience, by which, as moral agents, they are found disqualified both to *know* and to *do* the will of their moral Governor^a; so that, without such a divine interposition, the connection between him and his accountable creatures would be dissolved, and the original intention of their Creator, which all earth and heaven cannot overturn, would be defeated. And whilst, in such indirect and collateral conclusions as are founded upon facts,

* “ Natural Reason, contemplating the attributes of the Deity, discovered to us, that when human abilities alone are too weak to support us in the performance and discharge of moral duty, God will lend his helping hand to aid our sincere endeavours, by enlightening the *Intellect* and purifying the *Will*, by impressing upon the first all the speculative and practical truths, which the divine principle of Faith contains, and by purifying and supporting the Will in the embracing and executing that moral righteousness, the foundation of that Faith by which men are to be justified, and to which is annexed the enjoyment of **ETERNAL LIFE** in happiness.”

Warb. Div. Leg. B. ix.

See Bp. Gibson's 2d Past. Let.

VOL. II.

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Reason

Reason may find its just and fair account ; the truth of the holy Scriptures, which display these facts, may receive light and confirmation from these conclusions. But though, in opposition to the fictions and hypotheses of the patrons of natural religion, Reason may lend her modest aid in support of this general argument : to judge of this *Necessity* rests solely and properly with God, who, as in creating them at first, so in giving to men his revelation afterwards, acted from the pure motive of his *Wisdom* prompted by his *Love*—attributes which transcend all human thought.

To judge of the *Fact*—whether such a revelation containing such a principle, with its mysteries and credentials, was actually sent from God and received by men, by examining the *evidences* and *circumstances* which accompanied it—the *time* when—the *place* where, the *manner* how, it was delivered—the *form* in which it descends to us—and in what it is *contained*—together with the particular *substance* and *burden* of it—and how every part is to be rightly *understood* : these are the various and extensive subjects, which constitute

constitute the sublime office of THEOLOGIC REASONING, and the proper *Study of Divinity*.

This extensive body of reasoning is what a Faith which is rational, such as that of our holy religion, not only admits, but actually requires. It forms the indispensable duty of all, who have leisure and ability for the search, with all diligence and perseverance to pursue this reasoning. It is the proper and more particular business of those, who, for the instruction of christians, devote themselves to the exalted and honourable profession of divinity: and it should be, in a certain degree, the employment of all, who “ would give a “ reason of the hope that is in them^b.”— And mortal man need not complain, that the use of his Reason, in the concerns of his Religion, is either precluded or superseded by the too high assumptions of Faith: for these various topics of enquiry and learning open fields of investigation which will afford room for the ablest exertions of his understanding to the longest period of human life.

A very general sketch of the *Grounds and Method of Reasoning* in Theology, or matters

^b Peter iii. 15.

52 *The Chart and Scale*

of Religion ; and of the *Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, General, and Particular* ; subjects, which constitute the STUDY OF DIVINITY in its various and important branches, is all that the general plan of these lectures permits me to attempt.

S E C T. I.

Of the GROUNDS and METHOD of REASONING in Divinity.

THE principle of Theology itself, as well as the truths which it contains, lying out of the verge of human knowledge, and being totally different from all other principles, and kinds of truth ; the REASONING, which is adapted to the province of Divinity, will be found, both in its GROUNDS and METHOD, different, in the aggregate, from every other kind.

Wherever general principles are concerned, the reasoning is, first to the Principle, and then

then *from* the Principle, excepting in the Mathematics, where it is chiefly, if not entirely, the latter: In Theology, it has been observed, there is no mediate process of reason, by which the truths of religion can be deduced *from* the principle: it may, however, be properly said that, in Divinity, we reason *to* the Principle; but from *Grounds* of a different nature, and in a *Method* totally different, from what we do in all the other sciences.

This supernatural principle is not established upon an Induction of particular truths, by which it is made *universal*, from which universality its doctrines are entitled to our Faith: but “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing “by the word of God;” in which sentence, the Apostle has proposed the Principle itself, or *the Testimony of God*, the Means through which we receive it, which is *hearing*, and the end or effect which it is calculated to produce, or the conviction of *Faith*. The Principle is a divine fact, to be proved by the various *Means* by which it was confirmed and is conveyed to us, which are

• Rom. x. 17.

E 3

the

the just **GROUND**s of reasoning, and which alone warrant and support a reasonable Faith.

REASONING, therefore, in Divinity, respects these *Means* through which the light of Revelation, by which the divine Testimony was communicated, was established in the world, and conveyed down to us in these distant ages: and the **METHOD** which it pursues, will be to take the Bible in our hand, which professes to contain this word of God, and to trace its history through the intervening ages, and countries, and the persons of its editors, up to the time, place, and persons, in which, and by whom it was originally written; which will prove its *authenticity*. From the proof of its authenticity Reason will proceed to evince its divine *authority*, by examining all those various tests and marks of a supernatural commission, which are every where inseparably interwoven with its contents; and which are called the *External Evidences* of religion: which authority Reason will farther confirm, by examining the moral import of its immortal argument; or the *Internal Evidence* of its divinity. By these, which are the Means, Reason

Reason will be conducted safely and logically to the infallible Principle, the *Word* or *Testimony of God*, in which Faith at once finds its repose and end; and Reason will have only to *interpret* the meaning of that mysterious book in which they are recorded——Or, Reason may perform this religious task, by pursuing the reverse of this order, through the *Internal* and *External* Evidences of this *Authority*, to the *Authenticity* of the Holy Scriptures down to ourselves, forming the conviction of our Faith on the same firm and solid grounds.

In bringing Reason down the *descending* line, the different GROUNDS on which it argues, the different offices which it performs, or the METHOD it pursues, will be something like the following.

All Truth is born of God; and, as every dispensation of it, whether *natural* or *revealed*, proceeds from him, all the *parts* of it, however different they may be in kind, are consistent and correspondent members of one perfect whole. Thus truth is evermore the way

to truth; the less leading to the greater, the inferior to the superior, in a regular but sublime gradation: and, that the knowledge and certainty of one part is the only right road to the knowledge and certainty of another, is the cardinal and fundamental maxim of sound logic. As, from *first* and *intuitive principles* of external and internal sense, *human truths* are derived of different kinds; so, by a sublimer effort, from these *human truths*, as new *Grounds* or *Principles*, reason ascends to those which are *divine*. And this is the great connecting link between natural and supernatural knowledge, annexed to the footstool of God, from which the golden chain depends, by which Reason ascends from earth to heaven.

This method of conveying his divine truths into the minds of men, by connecting them with truths of which they were possessed before, and these the most natural and familiar, was universally adopted by our Lord, who never stooped to the formalities of an useless logic. Instead of defining and syllogizing, we find him perpetually illustrating and explaining spiritual and heavenly things, by the analogy

logy and similitude of those which are temporal and earthly. Of this conduct of our divine master and instructor, I shall only bring one example out of a thousand; and that, because it lays those very fundamental GROUNDS, from which we are enabled to reason in Divinity.—On asserting to the Pharisees and Scribes that he was “the light of the world,” in proof of this spiritual and important truth, he does not run into speculative argument or metaphysical discussion, which men could not possibly understand, however true; but he appeals to a public fact which experience and long usage had rendered most familiar to their understanding; “It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true;” from which testimony of two, he directly argues to the similar truth of his divine commission, “I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that hath sent me beareth witness of me^d.”—But, in his answers and expressions, more was generally meant than met the ear: and we shall find these two heavenly witnesses, in the different evidences

^d John viii. 17, 18.

which

which they brought forward, in support of this new light of the world, laying *two* different and important *Grounds* of Theologic Reasoning.

I. In the same conference with the Jewish doctors, our Lord puts this pointed and decisive question, “ Which of you convinceth “ me of SIN, and, if I speak the truth, why “ do ye not believe me “ ? ” He is in scripture eminently and expressly styled the *Word*, which Word consists of the *Doctrines* which he taught, and of which he was *himself* the subject ; and of the *Precepts* which he delivered, and of which he was *himself* the pattern : and “ Which of you,” said he in this important view of himself, “ convinceth me “ of sin ? ” For the truth of what he said, of his doctrines and of his precepts, he appealed, by this pointed question, to that *moral truth*, which his hearers had acquired in a natural way, and were convinced of from the principle of internal sense ; drawing a proof of his own divinity from the eternal difference of *good* and *evil*, *virtue* and *vice*,

* John viii. 46.

written

written by the hand of nature on the hearts of men, to be, among other uses, a familiar and standing witness of himself; concluding, and teaching all men to conclude, that, if upon examining his Word, by this native unerring witness, it be found perfectly consistent with their best ideas of the *Goodness* of God, and superior to their best ideas, it must, in all reason, be also consistent with the sister attribute of his *Truth*.—" And if " I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?"

Thus, it is by the evidence of *Moral truth* deduced in a natural way from the internal principle of consciousness^f, that reason is enabled to form a decisive judgment of the subject-matter of revelation; which is, therefore, if not properly to be called a principle, a sufficient GROUND of solid reasoning in matters of religion. Should any thing be found in Scripture as taught or enjoined of God, which, when fully understood, palpably contradicts his moral attributes, as they are discovered by the light of conscience and natural reason, (which are our first, and as

^f See Chap. IX. of the first volume.

far as they go, true, lights;) should any thing be found which is *vicious, immoral, and sinful*, opposite to his very being: we may and do safely conclude, that it could not proceed from Him, who is the author of good and not of evil. On the contrary, if the whole religious dispensation, both doctrinal and moral, betray that superabundant mercy and goodness, and good-will to men, which exceed all human conception, and which must be divine, it affords a most strong presumption, almost amounting to a full and positive proof, that it assuredly came from him.

Founded, as they are, in the unfathomable *Wisdom* of the Godhead, (to judge of which attribute of the divine nature, the whole order of intellectual beings and their *relations* are to be taken into the account,) many of the doctrines of our religion are transcendently sublime; and some of them above the highest reach of our understanding to compass, or our imagination to conceive; but to determine of the great *Mercy* and *Goodness* which they accord to the human race, the only *relations* to be considered are those between God
and

and man^s: and these attributes, shining upon the face of the whole Christian dispensation with the benignest influence, betray to natural reason conspicuous marks of its divine extraction; holding out “a bright and shining light,” by which we see in its constitution the hand of an immaculate original. This is a species of evidence which is mixed and interwoven in the vitals of our religion, and inherent in its very substance—“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth^h.”

Thus that MORAL VIRTUE, which is to form the crown and consummation of a justifying Faith, is made its first credential and foundation: so much order, beauty, harmony, and consistence, pervade the whole of God's moral government, and conspire to the perfection of the heavenly system.

By this INTERNAL EVIDENCE of his Word addressed to the hearts and consciences of

^s See Warb. Div. Leg. b. ix. p. 26.

^h John i. 17.

men,

men, Christ was "one who bore witness of himself."

II. But, however necessary and fundamental this species of Evidence may be to a religion which assumes to have come from God, it is not sufficient of itself alone to evince the authority of a divine commissionⁱ. Our Lord,

ⁱ In reverence to Truth, I hold myself obliged to own, that, in my opinion, the REASONABLENESS of a Doctrine pretended to come immediately from God, is, of itself alone, no PROOF, but a PRESUMPTION only, of such its divine Original: because though the *excellence* of the Doctrine (even allowing it to surpass all other moral teaching whatsoever) may shew it to be worthy of God, yet, from that sole *excellence*, we cannot certainly conclude that it came immediately from him; since we know not to what heights of moral knowledge the human understanding, unassisted by inspiration, may arrive. Not even our full experience that all the Wisdom of Greece and Rome comes extremely short of the Wisdom of the GOSPEL, can support us in concluding, with certainty, that this Gospel was sent immediately from God. We can but doubtfully guess, what excellence may be produced by a well-cultivated Mind, further blessed with a vigorous temperament, and a happy organization, of Body. The amazement into which Sir Isaac Newton's Discoveries, in Nature, threw the learned world; as soon as men became able to comprehend their Truth and Utility, sufficiently shews, what

Lord, therefore, appeals to another, though not more essential, more obvious and convincing, test, which stamps an irrefragable seal on the heavenly embassy. "And the Father that hath sent me beareth witness of me."

To call the attention of men to this other Evidence, as more obvious to their apprehension, and in itself more palpable and direct, he uses this strong and figurative language*. "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," (being only the "testimony of one," and insufficient of itself), pro-

what little conception it had, that the human faculties could ever rise so high, or spread so wide.

On the whole, therefore, we conclude, that, strictly speaking, there is no ground of conviction solid and strong enough to bear the weight of so great an interest, but that which rises on MIRACLES, worked by the first Messengers of a new Religion, in support and confirmation of their MISSION.

That is MIRACLES and MIRACLES ONLY, demonstrate that the Doctrine, which is seen to be worthy of God, did, indeed, COME IMMEDIATELY from him. Warb. Div. Leg. b. ix. c. 5.

* That he speaks figuratively is obvious from another passage in St. John's Gospel, where speaking *directly* he contradicts these words—"Though I bear record of myself, my record is true." viii. 14.

ceeding in the same sublime and pointed style,
 “ There is another that beareth witness of
 “ me, and I know that the witness which
 “ he witnesseth of me is true: for the WORKS
 “ that the Father hath given me to finish;
 “ the same WORKS that I do bear witness
 “ of me, that the Father hath sent me;
 “ and the Father himself which hath sent
 “ me hath borne witness of me¹.”—“ If I
 “ do not the Works of my Father, believe
 “ me not. But, if I do, though ye believe
 “ not me, believe the WORKS: that ye may
 “ know and believe that the Father is in me,
 “ and I in him^m.”

This second witness of his mission to which Christ appealed, which he calls Works, were the most plain and obvious *Facts*, intimately connected with his Doctrines and Precepts, as *collateral* vouchers of their divinity. After estimating the Internal or Moral Evidence, the next office of Reason is to canvass the pretensions of Revelation upon the GROUND of these external concomitant facts.

The nature of *Facts*, as a species of truth, was analyzed in the first volume of this work,

¹ John v. 31, 32, 36. ^m John x. 37, 38.

to which I must now recall the attention of my reader ; as they are those human truths, by which the author of our religion leads men immediately to the belief of its divine mysteries. This species of truth was found to be more direct and obvious than any other ; open to the apprehension, and familiar to the mind, of all men ; resulting immediately from the individual objects presented to the eye, the most perfect of the senses ; springing from effects themselves, without attention to their remoter causes ; and requiring nothing for their proof, but the coincidence of *transaction, person, time, and place*, or for their conviction, but that the *senses* be sound, competent, and well-informed. And, from their frequency and incessant occurrence, in the ordinary course of human things, Facts are not only most obvious and familiar in themselves, but also in their proximate and efficient causes^a.

The *Facts* which our Saviour laid as an important GROUND, from which men were to reason to the truth of his religion, were as palpable to the senses, and as easy to the apprehensions, of all men, as it is possible for

^a See Chap. IX.

any facts to be; differing only from the most common and ordinary that occur in the natural course of things, in one particular, which difference was as clearly to be apprehended by the plainest conception, as they were themselves. And it is to this important *difference*, to which they owe their evidence: for, whereas other facts are the effects of common and ordinary causes; these were still more obviously the immediate effects of a most *uncommon and extraordinary Cause*.

From the operation of this uncommon and extraordinary Cause, not producing new phenomena in a natural way, but doing wonderful and particular acts, and producing wonderful and particular effects, in a supernatural one, these Facts, appointed as the concomitant proofs and evidences of the religious dispensation, were called *Powers or Miracles*; being, indeed, such "Works as no man can do except God be with him," whose all-wise and perfect nature could not employ them to sanction a lie, but to confirm and establish the most important and beneficial truths.

These

These miracles, however new, and different from the ordinary and uniform experience of men, and the common effects of common causes, and, on that account, the less credible in themselves; yet, being the only adequate credentials which could confirm to men the Testimony of God and the divine commission of his Son, and absolutely necessary to the ends of a dispensation so important as to involve the happiness of the human race, they derive a credit both from their singular necessity, and the singular importance of their final cause; and, when supported by human testimony which is sufficiently authentic, they are entitled to the belief of all future ages°. They were also pronounced and

° ° A MIRACLE, even when best supported by human testimony, needeth to be still further qualified, ere it can deserve credit of a rational Believer: namely, that it be so connected with the system to which it claims relation, as that it seem to make part of it, or to be necessary to its completion.

It is otherwise in Facts acknowledged to be within the verge of nature and human agency. Here all that is wanted to recommend them to our belief, is the testimony of knowing and honest Witnesses.

and declared by their agent, the person who was invested with the supernatural power of working

‘ While in pretended Facts beyond the verge of nature and human agency, such as those we call MIRACULOUS, much more is required when offered to our belief. The controul and arrest of the established Laws of Nature, by the God and Author of Nature, either mediately or immediately, is a thing which COMMON EXPERIENCE hath rendered so extremely improbable, that it will at least balance the very best human testimony, standing unsupported and alone. And why? Because ordinary Facts carry their CAUSES openly and manifestly along with them: or if not so, yet none are required, as we are convinced their causes must be *intrinsically* there. But in Facts pretended to be *miraculous*, the immediate efficient cause is *extrinsic*; and therefore leaves room for doubt and uncertainty: or rather, when, in this case, men perceive *no cause*, they are apt to conclude there is none; or, in other words, that the report is false and groundless. So that when the *whole evidence* of the Fact, deemed *miraculous*, is solely comprised in human testimony, and is, in its nature, contrary to UNIFORM EXPERIENCE, the Philosopher will, at least, suspend his belief.

‘ But though in all MIRACLES, that is, in Facts deemed miraculous, the EFFICIENT CAUSE continues unknown; yet, in those which our holy Religion seems to recommend to our belief, the FINAL CAUSE always stands apparent. And, if *that cause* be so important as to make the Miracle necessary to the ends of the DISPENSATION, this is all that can reasonably be required to entitle it to

working them, to be expressly given as the standing test, as the broad seal, of his divine

our belief; when proposed to us with the same fullness of human testimony which is sufficient to establish a common fact: since, in this case, we have the MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY to secure us from an error, so fatal to our welfare.

And the confining our belief of *Miracles* within these bounds, wipes away (as I conceive) all the miserable sophistry of our modern pretenders to Philosophy, both at home and abroad, against MIRACLES, on pretence of their being contrary to GENERAL EXPERIENCE, in the ordinary course of things. At least the TRUE PHILOSOPHER [Mr. Locke] so thought, when he made that strict enquiry into Truth, towards the conclusion of his immortal Work—Though COMMON EXPERIENCE (says he) AND THE ORDINARY COURSE OF THINGS have justly a weighty influence on the minds of men to make them give or refuse credit to any thing proposed to their belief; yet there is ONE CASE wherein the STRANGENESS of the facts LESSENS NOT THE ASSENT to a fair testimony given of it. For where SUPERNATURAL events are SUITABLE TO THE ENDS AIMED AT BY HIM who hath power to change the course of nature, *then*, under such circumstances, they may be FITTER to procure belief by how much the more they are BEYOND OR CONTRARY TO ORDINARY OBSERVATION. This is the proper case of MIRACLES, which, well attested, do not only find credit themselves, but give it also to other truths, which need such confirmation.

Warb. Div. Leg. b. ix. c. 5.

F 3

commission,

commission, to which it was so requisite ; and, to complete their attesting power, they were essentially and inseparably connected with the most important part of the dispensation, and of the truths themselves^p. Thus, both from the expediency of the thing, the declaration of their agent, and their self-importance, they derive the strongest credibility.

^p ‘ We come next to that second Species of *Miracles* whose subject makes so essential a part in the Oeconomy of the GOSPEL, that, without it, the whole would be vain and fruitless. The first and principal of this species is the MIRACLE of Christ’s Resurrection from the Dead. *If Christ be not RAISED* (saith Saint Paul) *your faith is vain*; you are yet in your sins. And St. Peter uses the same argument to shew the NECESSITY of his Master’s *resurrection*—God (says he) raised him up, having loosed the pains of death; BECAUSE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF IT.—If Christ himself was not seen to enjoy the fruits of that Redemption, which was of his own procuring, what hopes could be entertained for the rest of mankind? Would it not have been too plausibly concluded, that this expedient REDEMPTION had proved ineffectual by CHRIST’s not rising? So necessarily (connected in the Apostle’s opinion) was the MIRACLE of our Saviour’s visible *resurrection* with the very essence of the Christian Faith—

‘ Thus, we see, the MIRACLE of the *Resurrection* made a necessary part of the integrity of the Gospel.’

Warb. Div. Leg. b. ix. c. 5.

So

So plain and easy of apprehension, are both the nature and use of *Miracles*, that fundamental groundwork of the Christian Faith. But some men, losing themselves in the mazes of philosophy, possess the unhappy talent of puzzling the plainest things : and, what is a greater evil, they draw others into the toils in which they have been taken, who, in vainly struggling to get free, entangle themselves the more, till the whole scene becomes a maze of perplexity and error¹.

By this EXTERNAL EVIDENCE of Works, “ the Father that sent him bore witness “ of him.”

Founded in the plainest truths of the *internal* and *external* Senses, so clear and convincing are these GROUNDS of Evidence, the one inherent in the very vitals of the religious dispensation, and the other essentially connected with it, to which our Lord appealed in proof of that “ Truth” which he brought down from heaven to be the “ Light of the world,” in that concise and expressive declaration, “ I am one that bear witness of myself; and “ the Father which hath sent me beareth

¹ Mr. Hume and his opponents.

“ witness of me.” And, when the blind obstinacy of his prejudiced and perverted hearers shut their eyes against the full blaze of this twofold light, with that dignity and sublimity of character which distinguished all that he said or did, he condemned their double blindness in this summary and decisive sentence—“ And now have they both seen
“ and hated both ME and MY FATHER ’.”

These two grounds of reasoning, so totally different from each other, are jointly indispensable to the establishment of that Divine Testimony which is the infallible principle of all revealed religion, mutually supporting and supported by each other—The internal *purity of the Doctrine* proving that the *Miracle* which accompanied it was *wrought of God*: and the *divine power of the Miracle* proving, in its turn, the *divinity of the Doctrine*.

III. In

* John xv. 24.

“ So little being known of the powers of created spirits, superior to ourselves, (some of which we are taught to believe are beneficent to man, and some averse) all that we can conclude of MIRACLES, considered only in themselves, is, that they are the work of agents, able,
“ in

III. In addition to this supernatural gift of Miracles exercised by Christ and his Apostles, for the rational foundation of his religion, in

‘ in some instances, to controul Nature, and divert her
‘ from her established course.—But whether this controul
‘ be performed immediately by the God of Nature, or by
‘ Agents acting under his direction, or, on the contrary,
‘ by malignant agents, at enmity with Man, and, for a
‘ time, permitted to indulge their perverse and hurtful
‘ purposes, cannot be known, but by the nature of that
‘ Doctrine, in support of which, the pretended MIRACLES
‘ are performed. The conclusion from this is, that THE
‘ MIRACLES ARE TO BE VERIFIED BY THE DOCTRINE.
‘ But then, since we know so little of the extent of the
‘ human understanding, we cannot determine of the true
‘ original of the Doctrine proposed to our belief, till it be
‘ supported by MIRACLES: now the conclusion from this
‘ is, that the DOCTRINE IS TO BE VERIFIED BY
‘ MIRACLES.

— ‘ In this there is no fruitless return of an unprogres-
‘ sive argument; but a regular procession of two distinct
‘ and different Truths, till the whole reasoning becomes
‘ complete. In truth, they afford mutual assistance to
‘ one another; yet not by taking back what they had
‘ given; but by continuing to hold what each had im-
‘ parted to the support of the other.

‘ On the whole, we conclude, that if any Messengers
‘ ever wanted the CREDENTIALS, OR MIRACLES, they
‘ were the first MESSENGERS OF GOD, in the revealed
‘ Mystery of the GOSPEL.’ Warb. Div. Leg. b. ix, c. 5.

the

the same interesting conference with the Jewish doctors, our Lord appealed to another GROUND of External Evidence, of a different and more complicated kind, in which the same miraculous power was conspicuously, and still more wonderfully, displayed. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

This is the evidence of PROPHECY, founded on a natural truth, which is evinced by the experience of men in every age—That *the knowledge of future contingent events is out of the reach of all human foresight*; and consequently, that, when the prediction of such events is verified in fact, a divine interposition must obviously have been made, for some important purpose. To attest the truth of a supernatural revelation, was frequently declared by our Lord himself, and the other illustrious persons who were favoured with this divine gift, to be that important purpose; and we cannot doubt the truth of this declaration, when made by those who were commissioned with the power, and entrusted with the means.

John v. 39.

The

The Evidence of Prophecy is of vast variety and extent, though connected in one wonderfully consistent chain ; having accompanied the dispensation of Theologic truth from the earliest ages, before the personal Advent of Christ, in whom, as in a centre, the whole was united ; and being farther extended and enlarged by him and his Apostles, so as to accompany it with its attesting power through all future time.

This is a most fruitful and growing field of theological study, in which the learned divine will meet with an extensive and sublime employment. This species of external evidence displays the most wonderful art and profound contrivance of its author ; having its events connected with each other, and distributed through all ages to the termination of the whole religious scheme : yet so involved in darkness, that the most penetrating eye cannot foresee them till they eventually come to pass, when the powers of the human mind are lost in astonishment at their exact correspondence with the predictions. In this field of study the office of the theologist is by no means to anticipate the events, in which his imagination

tion will lead him into a labyrinth of error ; but to study the language of prophecy, and to attend with a watchful eye to the history of things and changes as they happen in the world, and to class events with their predictions, as they are found clearly to correspond. But to expatiate in this field of Prophecy would extend these lectures much beyond the limits of the plan prescribed.

With one or other of these External Evidences the Christian Church hath been supplied, according to its different circumstances and occasions, and as they were best suited to the purposes of religion. *Miracles*, striking immediately upon the senses, were best calculated for the first planting of a new religion ; but they could not be continued through future ages ; for, by being perpetually repeated, in time they would have lost their very nature, and with that their evidence. When *Miracles* began to be withdrawn, *Prophecy* began to operate, which could not produce an immediate effect on the first witnesses, requiring some time after its enunciation ; and it was thus prepared to supply their place.

With

With us, therefore, it is a “furer,” and more lasting evidence: for whilst we have Miracles only on record, losing, perhaps, something of their force by time; we have Prophecy, in some part of its chain, in the act of completion, and growing more and more convincing, till, by the germinant luxuriancy of its branches gradually ripening their fruit, its force become irresistible.

By this divine expedient ‘the sovereign
 ‘Master, who no less manifests his constant
 ‘presence to the *moral*, than to the natural,
 ‘government of the world, has been graciously
 ‘pleased to give to these *later* ages of
 ‘the church more than an equivalent for
 ‘what he had bestowed upon the *earlier*, in
 ‘beginning to shower down on his chosen
 ‘servants of the new Covenant the riches of
 ‘his *Prophecy*, as the power of working
 ‘*Miracles* abated—And hence the Wisdom
 ‘of the divine dispenser is still further seen
 ‘in making *Prophecy* not only the *strongest*, but
 ‘the *last*, and concluding, evidence of a religion,
 ‘which, as it was the conclusion of the
 ‘whole scheme of revelation; so, having (as
 ‘it should seem) the largest portion of its
 ‘course

78 *The Chart and Scale*

- course to run, that species of evidence,
- which does not lose, but gain, strength by
- time, was best fitted to accompany it to its
- utmost period *.

As Miracles formed a necessary supplement to the *Moral* evidence, so this vast chain of *Prophecy*, fulfilling and to be fulfilled, confirm the truth of *Miracles*, in which they originated and which they now supply; wonderfully co-operating with both, and uniting in one great design, forming together a magnificent and stately system, an extensive fabric, of Evidence, equally to be admired for the symmetry and support of all the parts, and the harmony and disposition of the whole.

THESE External Evidences, by which the divine Testimony is established, and which are the Grounds of a rational faith, are not only calculated for the purposes of different men, according to the times and circumstances under which they are placed; but require a different train and METHOD of Reasoning in their proper *Authentication*.

* Warb. Div. Leg. b. ix. c. 6.

To

To the eye-witness of the facts called Miracles, which were performed by Christ himself, the evidence was so palpable and direct, that, where the mind was candid and well-disposed, they produced an *immediate* and full conviction of the whole truth of his religion, as the Testimony of God:

To the primitive Christians, who were not such eye-witnesses, the evidence was, indeed, one degree removed. Their conviction, however, flowed from the immediate report of the eye-witnesses, or else from that report at second hand; which report was, indeed, directly confirmed to them by the eye-witness of other miracles, “ the Lord working with “ his servants, and confirming the word with “ signs following.” In this case reason had a very *short* and easy operation.

In the succeeding age, when the canon of the New Testament was completing under the conduct of inspiration, these evidences were confirmed by recent facts, performed in times not far remote, by persons who were known, in places where the people lived; and published by these persons, in these times

• Mark xiv. 20.

and

and places, as the original Miracles had been themselves, challenging all to contradict them if they could: and the conviction of Christians was founded in the sacred writings so recently attested, and in the inspired authority of their respective authors, who could be clearly proved. All which was directly confirmed by Prophecies, which were beginning to be fulfilled. In this case reason had a *longer* operation.

We, in these distant ages, are put under very different circumstances both of *time* and *place*. The times, in which the truths of theology were revealed, and their evidences exhibited to the world, and in which both were committed to written record, are many ages removed from ours; and the places are at the distance of many countries: so that they must necessarily come down to us through the lengthened channel of human tradition.

For the Testimony of God recorded in the holy scriptures, which is the governing principle of our faith, we are, therefore, indebted to the *Testimony of men*; which opens an *extensive* and *laborious* field of reasoning, and critical discussion.

The

The METHOD which Reason is to follow, in this extensive division of theology, is, by a logical train of *historical investigation*, to establish a series of important facts*. And the first question that presents itself to the theological enquirer, will be—Whether the *Senses* of the immediate witnesses of the supernatural facts and evidences of a divine commission were *sound* and *well-informed*; clear and competent judges of them, subject to no fraud or imposition†? And to this another will succeed as its counter-part—Whether their credit is to be relied upon as *faithful* and *honest Relators*‡?—These two questions, in their joint affirmative, constitute the requisite qualification of a true witness and faithful narrator, neither deceived himself, nor intending to deceive others: without which primary qualification, any history may be a fallacy or an imposture,

These immediate witnesses or their immediate friends, the appointed instruments of the divine testimony in all its parts, were specially

* See chap. x. sect. 1, of the first volume.

† See p. 194, 195, 196, of ditto.

‡ See p. 210, 211. of ditto.

and divinely commissioned, and aided by a supernatural power, to commit the whole substance of its truths and evidences of every kind to *written record*, and authorized by divine assistance to add whatever was necessary, by way of explanation, prophecy, or exhortation, to complete the whole dispensation of Grace to man; that “the faith of future ages might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” The *originals* or *autographies* themselves of this written record, forming the canon of the New Testament executed under this infallible guidance, it hath pleased divine providence to take away from us and out of the world, and only to leave *copies* of them to be transmitted down the channel of all future time by human means, super-intending, no doubt, so sacred a deposit by the invisible eye of its special care.

The questions, which arise upon these circumstances, will, therefore, be—Whether the originals themselves were the *genuine productions* of those immediate witnesses or their immediate friends, whose names they bear? and—Whether these productions had actually
the

the seal of *divine inspiration* ? Then comes a most important and extensive subject of theological inquiry and learned investigation—Whether those manuscripts and books which contain the copies, with their ancient translations, editions, and quotations in different languages, be the *faithful transcripts* of the originals ?

And, to conclude this preliminary part of the extensive study of Divinity, As these numerous manuscripts, translations, editions, and quotations are found, upon comparison, to differ from each other, though in no very essential points, yet in many particulars of smaller account ; another subject of nice examination and critical judgment opens itself to the theologist in an extensive *collation* and comparison of correspondent texts in order to investigate, as far as possible, the mutilations, additions, and alterations, which have been made through fraud, ignorance, or accident, and, by an able and impartial decision, to restore the true and genuine text,

So long and laborious is the way which leads fallible men, in these distant ages, to the

84 *The Chart and Scale*

infallible Principle of Theology. On these Grounds of judgment, which are the commonest truths of common life, derived from the internal and external Senses, and from the documents of sound and authentic History, (which are as the *primary principles*, from which we reason to the divine Testimony as a *secondary* one,) the truth and certainty of the Christian Religion are firmly built. Reason, we have more than once observed, can only judge of Evidences; and these Evidences are the best, they are indeed all, which the nature of that religion, being purely divine and spiritual, separate from all human and earthly things, can possibly admit: and, whatever men may think of them, they were thought by Him, who gave us that religion, sufficient in every age for our information and conviction. They are in all respects calculated to vindicate the *Goodness*, and to display the *Mercy* of God, “ whose ways are
“ not as our ways, nor thoughts as our
“ thoughts;” who, whether we may be able to discern them or not, knowing himself what causes will produce the designed effects, always employs the fittest means to accomplish
the

the end he has in view ; and who has taken especial care, in every part, and under every circumstance, of his religious dispensation, that “ our Faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

By such a METHOD of extensive and various REASONING philosophically instituted and logically conducted, and upon these GROUNDS, is erected a rational and sublime Theology ; just as, in its different province, a system of Natural philosophy is erected upon physical and experimental principles :—a Theology, which, as a citadel founded upon a rock, challenges, in every age, the assaults of infidelity. After the most accurate and critical enquiry, the acutest discernment, and the profoundest learning, which have been repeatedly exerted on the one hand ; after all that the keenest acumen, the subtlest artifice, and the deepest sophistry, could object on the other, which a subject of the greatest and most universal concern to men could not fail to excite : upon these Grounds the Christian Religion has been *established* and *confirmed*, as much by the attacks of its bitterest adversaries, as by the defences of its ablest advocates. Upon

these Grounds it has gone on conquering and to conquer, triumphing over interest and ambition, ignorance and learning, friends and enemies, the Pope and Aristotle. Reason and sound Philosophy are those allies, on whose honest and faithful service she depends. In every age and country, where they have come, they have erected their standard in her cause. They banish error and superstition, scepticism and infidelity, from her shrine; and rejoice to place that *Faith*, which is the pure offspring of heaven, in the immoveable seat of the *Understanding*.

SECT. II.

Of the Study of the HOLY SCRIPTURES.

WHEN, by establishing the infallible Principle of Theology, the Testimony of God, that sacred fountain from which the mysteries of religion spontaneously flow, Reason has cleared the way to the foundation of our most holy Faith; the *fruits* of

of the heavenly vineyard remain to be gathered with diligence and preserved with care, and to be so faithfully and plentifully distributed among men, that they may be enjoyed by all, who are willing to embrace and to improve them, in the easiest and most advantageous way : which opens another field for the exercise of REASON in the province of Theology, in which the industrious husbandman will find more and different employment.

The HOLY SCRIPTURES are the sole repository of all the mysteries of religion, doctrinal and moral, containing the whole form and substance of theologic truth. They are styled “ the oracles of God,” speaking and declaring his will to every age and country, in a language, which, though sometimes plain and express, is sometimes as mysterious as the truths which they reveal. They are that sole and universal spring, whose living waters are to flow pure and unadulterated “ for the “ healing of the nations,” to the end of time : and the critical study and analysis of every part present the sublimest subject of rational investigation to the mind of man.

In this part of theology, the act of Reasoning becomes an act of *Interpretation*, in the conduct and execution of which, the deepest learning, the maturest judgment, the ablest criticism, the most extensive information, and, I may say, the purest virtue, will find ample scope for the exercise of their powers. And as, in the prosecution of every subject, the first and the most important thing is to escape the wrong, and to get into the right, road; so, by adopting that method of interpretation, which is philosophically and logically just, we shall save much fruitless toil, and be most successful in the pursuit.

That, however infinite and various in his truth, "the Lord our God is *one* God," consistent with himself and uniform in operation; so that one part of his truth is every where introductory to, and illustrative of, another, is the solid foundation of that logical *analogy*, from which the natural system of the universe is a key to the moral, by the use of which the divine philosopher is enabled to unlock the celestial mansions. A right knowledge of the dispensation of *Nature* will, therefore,

therefore, furnish us with a clue which will lead us to the right knowledge of that *Grace*: and, by putting them side by side in a comparative estimation, we shall see that the true method of interpreting the one will introduce us to the true method of interpreting the other. ‘Two books or volumes of study,’ says our great philosopher, ‘are laid before us, if we would be secured from error: first, the *Scriptures* revealing the will of God: and then the *Creatures* expressing his power, whereof the latter is a key unto the former.’ The display of himself, in the great volume of his *Works*, will open to our understanding the display of himself, in the smaller volume of his *Word*: and the œconomy of the one will illustrate and unfold the œconomy of the other.

Impressed upon every thing we observe in the natural system of the universe, the Power, the Wisdom, and the Goodness, of the Deity, meet the eye in such bold and prominent features, as to force themselves upon minds the most torpid and uninformed. A knowledge

* Baconus de Augm. Sc. lib. 1.

also

also of the general uses of such things, as are necessary for the subsistence and convenience of human life, is easily attained : and all the domestic and social benefits, which are requisite to the personal security and comfort of mankind, are extracted and derived with ease from the various materials with which they are surrounded. So obvious is the book of nature, in its most useful pages, to the plainest understandings. With equal clearness and simplicity the fundamental truths of Christianity are revealed to all men. The great duties of Faith, Obedience, and Repentance, which are sufficient to “ make “ men wise unto salvation,” are most plainly and distinctly taught in almost every page of the sacred volume ; and every moral virtue or obligation is inculcated with a clearness and simplicity, to which all moralists must yield——So *openly* hath the universal Father dealt with all men in both his dispensations ; leaving nothing concealed, which is necessary or sufficient for the instruction of the ignorant and unlearned (who in all human society must always form a great majority,) either in the use of things, which contribute
to

to the comfort of this life, or in their religious dependence and moral duty, in which their future happiness is involved.

But, however forcibly these divine attributes may impress themselves upon the attention of all men; or however easily all the commonest uses of common things may be discovered: it is only to the eye of the philosopher penetrating, by accurate and experimental observation, into the deeper recesses of nature, in the various parts of her extensive volume, that that Power is displayed in all its wonder, that Wisdom unfolded in all its glory, and that Goodness shines out in all its beauty;—that all those latent causes are unfolded, which, in the mechanism of the material system, produce such various and astonishing effects. And, however clear and obvious both in its general truths and duties, the moral dispensation is replete with deeper and sublimer mysteries than the natural. The volume of inspiration is professedly a mysterious book, challenging the deepest investigation of the learned in every age, particularly of those who are appointed by more than human authority to be the dispensers and interpreters

preters of the word, and calculated, as it appears to be, to employ their study and industry to the end of time.

However clearly its fundamental articles may be delivered to the apprehension of all men, the Christian dispensation is prophetic and *parabolical* of course; and its particular evolution in the different periods of the world, the future fate and fortunes of the Gospel, and of the Christian Church, which are called “the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven,” will ever remain a subject for the investigation of the ablest and most recondite reasoning.

So *obvious*, and at the same time so *mysterious*, is the God of truth in his dispensations of it. Whilst, both in his *Works*, and in his *Word*, he is so open and perspicuous, that “he who runs may read,” whilst he is speaking home to the information and conviction of the *many*, whose faculties are usefully and honourably employed in the necessary occupations of life: this deeper investigation, both into the constitution of Nature and the œconomy of Grace, is allotted to the virtuous and vigorous exertions of a *few* inquisitive and contem-

contemplative minds; to be rewarded with the high gratification of intellectual improvement; and to be crowned with the still higher satisfaction of communicating to all the use of their discoveries.

Similar and analogous as they are in their whole œconomy, in the STUDY and cultivation of these two different parts of learning, similar causes will be found to produce similar effects of ill or good success: and the right method to be pursued by one, will open us the way to that of the other,

Systems and *Hypotheses* in general, framed by philosophers out of their own ideas divorced by an act of imagination from the truth of things, were the bane of Natural Philosophy, and the prolific cause of all the errors, which for centuries opposed the advancement of physical science. Above descending to the drudgery of experiment and the painful task of accurate enquiry and particular observations for the principles of physical truth, philosophers were pampering their genius and indulging their vanity in dreams and speculations

lations of their own invention. Hence, in their interpretation of nature, instead of finding a real world, the image of its author, they produced a number of imaginary ones, from the pregnant womb of fancy, as diverse from each other, as almost equally unrelated to him. And, to keep pace with these interpreters of nature, their ingenious brethren the school theologists, instead of searching the Scriptures by a grammatical, and truly critical, which is indeed a laborious, examination, for the truths which they every where contain, were as inventively but more mischievously employed in erecting similar schemes of faith and hypothetical systems of divinity, as different from each other as abhorrent from the dictates of the one inspirer of one true religion.

Correspondent to the genius of these air-built systems, was the logic employed about them. Logic, in these ingenious ages, disdained to stoop to the office of finding truth. As imagination could more readily invent, than reason could investigate, the task of finding truth was allotted to the former; and logic had only to forge artificial weapons for
its

its attack and its defence. It furnished both the philosophical and theological champion with a kind of magic armour of such dexterous contrivance, that the patrons of different theories could attack and defend, with such equal success as never to injure or destroy, them, and eternally contend about them, with an equal shew of conquest on either side*. And it was only just, that such easy and ingenious systems should have such an easy and ingenious logic. Consisting of *terms* of its own, to which, by an arbitrary, though formal, *definition*, it annexed what ideas it pleased, without regard to the truth of things; it could make every phænomenon of nature bend to every hypothesis, and distort every text of scripture to the support of every system.

* Hæc inutilis subtilitas duplex est, & spectatur aut in materia ipsa, qualis est inanis speculatio, cujus generis reperiuntur & in theologia & in philosophia haud paucæ: aut in modo & methodo tractandi. Hæc apud scholasticos fere talis erat. Super unaquaque re proposita formabant objectiones; deinde objectionum illarum solutiones, quæ solutiones ut plurimum distinctiones tantum erant. Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. 1.

Upon

Upon such a foundation, and by the help of such an instrument, was erected the Babel of the schools in philosophy and divinity; equally the pest of science and religion; which, for many ages, threw its dark shade over the most enlightened parts of Europe. Polemical divinity, consisting of a number of hypothetical and factitious questions agitated on both sides with all the sophistry of disputation, and in a language as unintelligible to a rational understanding, as that of the ancient Babel after the confusion of tongues, was the legitimate offspring of such a theology and such a logic. Universities adopted this as the main object of their study and cultivation; in the exercise of which, instead of opening the scriptures by a just and candid interpretation, by handling the word of God artfully and deceitfully, their theological disputants scarcely found a text in scripture, which they did not pervert and misapply, in defending their own dogmas and inventions, or in subverting those of their opponents. Instead of employing their reason soberly and discreetly to the useful purposes of theology, they contaminated its most sublime and sacred mysteries by an impure mixture

mixture of metaphysical speculation. These fabricated questions produced an exhaustless fund of polemical contention (for of error there is no end), and, though held out by sage divines as of the last importance to religion, they were "foolish and unprofitable" at best; and so exactly descriptive of those "vain babblings, profane novelties of words, and oppositions of science falsely so called," against which St. Paul has cautioned his disciples Timothy and Titus, as to warrant the assertion, that he foresaw the folly, and foretold the conduct, of the learned in distant ages^c.

And, what was more than all inauspicious to the study of theology and the pure interpretation of the word of God, from the prejudice of education and the prevalence of habit enflamed by the heat of party zeal, these

^b 1 Tim. vi. 20.

^c Qua in litigiosa subtilitate increpatio illa Paulina non magis ad suam ætatem referre, quam ad sequentia tempora deduci, potest. *Devote prophanas vocum novitates & oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ.* His enim verbis duo signa scientiæ suspectæ atque eментitæ proponit. Primum est, vocum novitas & insolentia; alterum rigor dogmatum, qui necessario oppositionem, & dein altercationes quæstionesque inducit, &c. Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. 1.

fashionable systems and disputations warped, by an insensible contagion, the understanding of men of superior learning and sounder judgment; inasmuch, that in their translations, interpretations, and commentaries of the holy bible, instead of representing the meaning of the original faithfully, critically, and candidly, they could not avoid giving it a colour of their own to favour the sect or dogma to which they were inclined.

Thus the study of Physics and Divinity, instead of being the just interpretation of Nature and the Scriptures, which are the works of God, became the invention and support of systems, which were the fabrications of men; and the honour of the philosopher and divine consisted in a pertinacious and obstinate adherence to the systems in which they had been bred, and in standing forward, in the pride and formality of a contentious logic, invincible champions in their defence; as a mercenary foldier is bound to fight and to die under the banner to which he has engaged.

From

From these causes, so inauspicious to the progress of good learning, neither of these studies made any material advances for many ages; till the superior genius of Lord Bacon chalked out a new and different line, by the invention of a sounder logic, for the study and interpretation of Nature, and gave such clear and collateral intimations in regard to those of the holy Scriptures, that a few philosophers and divines magnanimously embarked in the cause of truth, and, in despite of the statutable and formal discipline, have gone hand in hand in emancipating reason from the bonds of factitious system, and, upon experimental and scriptural grounds, have been equally successful in the interpretation both of the volume of Nature and of that of Grace.

The success, which crowned the labours of the philosopher in this new line of cultivation, gave encouragement to the theologist to pursue a similar plan of study^d: and the ablest divines of the church of England have employed their learning and their labours after a more rational and successful method, much

^d See Introd. to Book ix. of Warb. Div. Leg.

to the honour of their profession, and to the great emolument of the first of sciences. What has been so ably and auspiciously begun, in this theological reform, it is incumbent on the learned to pursue and finish. Avoiding the extremes of scepticism and superstition, of licentious speculation and blind credulity, it is time to embrace and to second the reform in every part of our public discipline, by adopting the most judicious and proper means. It is time to turn our backs with shame on the fabricated systems and absurd positions of artificial and hypothetical divines, who usurped or infringed the prerogatives of scripture, and to explore the Bible itself, that pure and genuine store, that inexhaustible fund of sound theology : and, if systems are formed, to let them be only constructed on a scriptural foundation. It is time, in short, to change, to shut up, or to pull down, the schools, those monuments of ignorance for ages past. It is time to abandon disputation and altercation, which at best are useless and unprofitable, and, instead of contending about nothing for an empty bubble, to go hand in hand in pursuit of the genuine prize ; advancing with modesty, with candour

dour and discretion; and following truth not for the sake of triumph, but with an eye to charity. And, under the direction of such a leader and logician as our own country has afforded, we need not be afraid of pushing on our enquiries in the volume of *Nature*, or in that of *Grace*: if we do not examine, with too bold and profane an eye, into the deeper mysteries of religion; into that inner sanctuary, in which the Deity alone resides, and into which he has forbidden us to look.

But, though “the secret things belong to the Lord our God,” yet “the things, which are revealed, belong to us and to our children for ever.” And let no one, says Lord Bacon, taking to himself the credit of a sobriety and moderation ill applied, think or maintain that men can search too far in the book of God’s word, or in that of his works, in *Theology* or *Philosophy*: but rather, let them excite themselves to the search, and boldly advance in the pursuit of an endless progress in both; only taking care lest they apply their knowledge to

Deut. xxix. 29.

II 3

swelling

‘ swelling not to charity, to ostentation not
‘ to use ^f.’

Thus, the kingdoms of *Nature* and *Grace* are as two parallel lines following the same direction, but which can never be made to touch. These studies, by a general and close analogy, reflect light upon each other, and are to be successfully cultivated in a similar way : but in their separate prosecution, that great maxim of all sound logic, *never to mix and confound them together*, should be most sacredly observed ; the neglect of which will be shewn, in some future stage of these lectures, to be a fundamental cause of error ^g.

And

^f Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. 1.

^g To this mixture of these different parts of learning we may trace the origin of HUTCHINSONIANISM, that strange infatuation, by which the judgment of a sect of very learned and worthy men, led away by whim and fancy and for want of a proper strength and comprehension of mind, has been astonishingly betrayed ; whom Warburton, in his rude style, denominated *a cabalistic crew, blind workers in dirt and darkness*. Lord Bacon, who knew the proper nature, and saw all the just dependencies and independencies of the different parts of learning, and what assistance they could mutually impart, has not only warned us against this mixture
and

And another admonition with which that reformer of learning concludes the above remark is too important to the STUDY of DIVINITY to be neglected—‘Taking care again, not to mix and confound these distinct parts of learning *Theology*, and *Philosophy*, together^h.’

and confusion in general, but has stigmatized this particular evil in the directest words—*Alter excessus ejus modi præsupponit in scripturis perfectionem, ut etiam omnis philosophia ex earum fontibus peti debeat, ac si philosophia alia quævis res profana esset & ethnica. Hæc intemperies in schola Paracelsi præcipue, nec non apud alios invaluit. Initia autem ejus a Rabbiniis & Cabalistis defluerunt. Verum istiusmodi homines non id assequuntur quod volunt: neque enim honorem, ut putant, scripturis deferunt; sed easdem potius deprimunt & polluant. Quemadmodum enim theologiam in philosophia quærere, perinde est ac vivos quæras inter mortuos: ita, e contra, philosophiam in theologia quærere, non aliud est, quam mortuos quærere inter vivos. De Augm. Sc. lib. ix.*

• Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. i.

S E C T. III.

Of the GENERAL INTERPRETATION of the Holy Scriptures.

THAT the Holy Bible, both in matter and manner, is a book totally different from all others that ever were or could be written, is a position founded on this great and eternal truth—that “the thoughts” of Him, by whom it was dictated, “are not as the thoughts, “nor his ways as the ways, of men.” It will, consequently, require a different INTERPRETATION.

In this volume of his Grace, as in that of Nature, the Almighty hath hidden under a veil the treasures of his wisdom, to furnish employment to the learned; as well as opened those of his goodness and mercy, to the use and enjoyment of all men: and, though its Interpretation has been the task of many ages, as a mine unexhausted and inexhaustible, it is calculated, as has been observed, to exercise
the

the skill and ingenuity of the learned to the end of time.

The fathers and earlier commentators of the church filled the world with annotations upon the books of the sacred volume: but, whether from the use of imperfect copies and inaccurate translations, or whether from a partial and unphilosophical method of interpreting, no great light has been reflected upon the bible from their numerous illustrations. Instead of collating and correcting the text, in the first place, and of establishing, in the second, some just and general rules of interpretation: their labours were wasted in framing notions and inventions of their own, as absurd in themselves, as repugnant from the author; or their learning was misemployed in labouring every trifling particular with a great variety and extent of explanation, whilst they totally overlooked things of real and general importance. We need not, therefore, wonder, if their scriptural lucubrations be of little use in leading us into the recondite meaning of the sacred code.

In addition to these general defects, commentators of later date became the bigots of religious persuasion, or the slaves of factitious system, which warped or obscured their partial judgment. By a taint early contracted in a scholastic education, and confirmed by narrow habits of thinking and reasoning, each became the furious antagonist of another, whose main object was to confute his ingenious and partial interpretations, and to support his own. Interpretation assumed the character of *disputation*; and, instead of critical explanations and luminous remarks, the sacred commentators are filled with private bickerings and systematical altercations. Refinements on words and phrases, twisted by the subtlety of invention into every shape out of the right one, employed the rest of their bulky labours. Things the most obvious and direct they wrested from their meaning; and those, which are involved in real difficulty, were left to remain undisturbed in their obscurity. ‘The schoolmen,’ says a great author in the reign of Elizabeth, ‘spinne into small threds and subtile distinctions many times

‘ times the plainesse and simplicitie of the
 ‘ scriptures: their wits being like strong wa-
 ‘ ter, which eateth through and dissolveth the
 ‘ purest gold—For God knows what a mul-
 ‘ titude of meanings the wit of man imagin-
 ‘ eth to himself in the scriptures, which
 ‘ neither Moses, the Prophets, or Apostles,
 ‘ ever conceived!’

Thus, however much may have been writ-
 ten, much remains uninterpreted: and, nei-
 ther from the number of the commentators
 nor the size of their productions, can we con-
 clude, that the scriptures are yet explained.
 In consequence of this partial, this frivolous,
 and this contentious, mode of interpreting,
 most of the bulky folios, with which the
 presses of Europe have groaned for ages past,
 are replete with an unmeaning jargon, inter-
 larded with the same unedifying disputa-
 tions, and filled with the same uninteresting
 remarks.

That, out of the vast heaps of annotations,
 of matter and mixture of every kind, raked
 together by the dull industry of the elder and
 later commentators, some things valuable

* Ralegh's History of the World, chap. ii. § 1.

should

should not be found, would be a paradox unprecedented in the course of human things: since there are few men, in any profession or sphere of life, who say much upon subjects which they profess to understand, without saying some things well. There are some lights which shine out of the surrounding heaps of darkness and confusion, like diamonds out of the immense rubbish of the mine, worth treasuring up for the elucidation of this mysterious book: and the interpreters of future ages are indebted to the indefatigable industry of a collector^k, whose laborious Synopsis has brought together every thing worth preserving; by which he has saved them the trouble of diving into a vast and tumultuous sea, in which the few pearls to be found would not reward their labour.

With these few advantages derived from the voluminous lucubrations of former times, a ray of brighter hope has dawned upon the bible in these later ages, from a more rational and philosophical method of study, and that more candid and liberal enquiry, which do honour to the present impartial and enlighten-

^k Poole.

ing

ing era : when men of different educations, countries, and persuasions in religion, eminent for learning and indefatigable in industry, abandoning the contentions, and despising the bigotry, of former ages, unite as Christians in one great and common cause ; when, instead of labouring to confound and to perplex, they are anxious to aid and to assist, each other ; and, to the credit of learning and themselves, go hand in hand, in the same honourable walk, with Truth only for their guide and Charity for their companion.

Impressed with an awful sense of the authority of the sacred volume, and of the importance of its immortal argument, the philosophical interpreter will shake off the bias of prejudices however formed, of opinions however sanctioned, and of passions however constitutional ; and will bring to the work the advantage of a pure and impartial mind. Instead of wasting all his labour upon a number of minute and less significant particulars, and of refining away plain and obvious sense by the subtleties of a narrow and corrosive mind, his first object will be to institute

stitute a theological enquiry into the general design and purport of the written word; and, from principles and instructions fully contained and fairly understood, to illustrate the true *Nature and Genius of the religious dispensation*, in all its parts. He will mark the difference between the *first* and *second* Covenants, that of *Works* and that of *Grace*, and observe the connection that subsists between them. He will trace the temporary œconomy of the *Old Testament*, and weigh the nature and intent of the *partial Covenant* with the Jews, observing with astonishment how it was made introductory of better things to come: and he will follow it through the *Law* and the *Prophets*, in its wonderful evolutions, till he see this vast and preparatory machine of providence crowned and completed in the eternal Gospel. This *New Testament*, the last and best part of the religious dispensation, he will pursue through the sacred pages of that Gospel with redoubled attention; contemplating, with purest love and profoundest admiration, the divine *foundation* on which it is built, the supernatural *means* by which it was executed, and the immortal *end* it has in view.

Upon

Upon this general foundation all the particular labours of the sacred interpreter will be formed, as the object which they are to illustrate and display. Great and awfully sublime is the task of the Theologist in this most important department of his profession—a task to the adequate performance of which many are the acquisitions, qualifications, and accomplishments, indispensably requisite; various and extensive are the studies to be pursued.

I. *The learned Languages.*

THE LANGUAGES, in which the books of holy scripture were originally written and early translated, form the first object of the interpreter's study and attention, as being the proximate matter of all theologic truth: for the book, which records the Testimony of God, is only to be competently understood in its original and primitive form.

These are not to be studied in a careless and superficial way. They are to be pursued radically

radically and grammatically, through their inflexions and variations, their dependencies and connections, their dialects and changes; and, to a competent knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of each, the student will call in the assistance of the best lexicons, commentaries, and concordances; to enable him to understand their peculiar genius and structure, their anomalies and analogies, their relations, and their differences from each other.

THE PRIMITIVE LANGUAGES of the Old Testament are too little known, and cannot be too accurately and minutely studied by theologists. Fully convinced of the vast importance of this ancient and oriental learning to the better knowledge and illustration of the scriptures, learned men, of different universities in Europe, have applied themselves with great assiduity to their grammatical and critical study. Since this part of theological learning, so essential to its success, has been so zealously undertaken and so ably conducted, we may congratulate ourselves upon the extensive and accurate *collations* of the sacred writings, and may hope to receive an improved and uniform translation

translation of the whole, the fruit of their joint and honourable labours.

The genius of the GREEK TONGUE, in which the New Testament was written, and in which we have a very ancient and invaluable translation of the Old, which, for some ages before St. Jerome, was thought by the learned to have been aided in its formation by more than human skill, and which was certainly sanctioned by Christ and his Apostles, 'is universal and transcendent, and, from its propriety and universality, made for all that is great and beautiful in every subject, and under every form of writing'.¹ And it cannot excite our wonder, that the Holy Ghost should employ the most perfect language that ever existed in the world, to be the general vehicle to convey and disseminate the treasures both of the Old and New Testaments, and to be the standing monument of religious truth through all future ages. The Greek tongue is, therefore, of infinitely more importance to Theology than all other languages. It is capable of a more *precise* and

¹ Harris, Hermes, p. 423.

adequate expression, of being more *distinctly* and *accurately* understood; and, what is more than all, it is *universally applied*, that is, by taking the Septuagint as a part of the sacred code, whose words and phrases are uniformly applied in the New Testament, and whose authority is sanctioned by that application, the Greek tongue is co-extensive with the whole of sacred writ: so that, by mutual reflection, one part can receive and communicate light to another, which is the true key of all scriptural interpretation.

So great and important are the advantages derived to theology from this incomparable tongue: and, whilst we may rejoice to see our divines bending their attention more generally to the oriental languages, we have to lament with deeper sorrow, that this language, so much more generally useful, becomes less generally understood: I mean grammatically and critically, not superficially, understood. Fashion may sometimes lead us right; but, unless carefully guarded, it will be sure to lead men wrong, in every sphere of life. Since, led on by a few great and illustrious characters, it has pursued the oriental languages

languages with so much avidity and applause, the Greek tongue, which it is indispensably incumbent upon every divine to be well acquainted with, seems to have been proportionably neglected. This is an evil, which, perhaps more than any other, disgraces the literary discipline of the present age: for which the universities of England would be justly responsible, were they not in great part shielded from the reproach by the ignorance or indolence of schoolmasters, on the one hand, who want a Busby to teach, or to chastise them; and by the indifference or obedience of prelates, on the other, who, seeing the first honours and emoluments of the sacred profession to be enjoyed without much Greek, too easily dispense with it in those whom they admit into the inferior orders of the church^m. It is, indeed, a reproach to the

^m When young men are sent to the university without having been well grounded in the rudiments of this various and extensive language, it is seldom indeed that the industry of a college-tutor, if he will stoop from the higher departments of his office to this necessary task, can produce the desired effect: for, whilst they have before their eyes such frequent and popular instances of men admitted, first into

the clerical learning of the age, that this, the most perfect of languages, in which the book of light and life was either originally written or early translated, is so superficially studied, and so imperfectly understood^a.

The

the sacred offices, and then into the best benefices, of the church, much more ignorant and unqualified than themselves, the tutor may employ his labour and exhortation to little purpose. They will rely upon the interest which will be made for them with the bishop; or, if they have not friends on whom they can ground this hope, they can, however, advance with confidence, encouraged by the band of *Reverend Captains* and others, who have so successfully taken the field before them. And this indolence is confirmed by the cruel and mortifying reflection, that, whilst they behold these men seizing the first emoluments of the profession, they would be themselves destined, without friends, to languish away their lives, with all the Greek of Cyril, upon a cure of 40l. a year.

^a These are evils, which have too long been a stain upon the credit of the church of England, the support and glory of our constitution, and which are not entirely removed. But, if too many of its clergy are deficient in this fundamental branch of theological learning, what are we to say of that formal and pompous class of men, the Dissenting Ministers, who maintain, upon all occasions, the utmost solemnity of profession, and, on all subjects, the profoundest affectation of learning; whilst 'the smell of Greek' has scarcely 'passed upon their garments':—Instead of wasting their time in breeding civil mutiny and fomenting dis-
sension

The LATIN TONGUE was spoken by a people, who, though not so famous in arts and elegance as their eastern neighbours, were more renowned for arms, by which they extended the Roman empire over all the civilized parts of Europe and Asia: and their dominions, so enlarged, lying between the scene of scripture-history and all the western provinces and islands, their language, though less copious and in every respect much inferior to the other, became the vehicle by which the books of Holy Scripture and the works of the Grecian fathers were safely conveyed to us. In this tongue we have the Old Latin version called the *Vulgate* or *Italic*°, whose antiquity and authority are superior to many of the Greek manuscripts; and the number of commentaries, translations, and dissertations, which have been written in different ages since the Latin fathers, in pure, nervous, and elegant

sensation in the state, if these superficial and ostensible, but industrious, men would make the Greek grammar the subject of their labours, the nation might be more free from faction for fifteen years to come.

° See Simon's Hist. Critic. des vers. du Nov. Test. in Martianay Prolegom.

style, are of the greatest importance to theology. The main use, however, of this language is, that it is become the channel by which we arrive at the knowledge of the Greek.

II. Of the Scripture *Styles*.

From the Languages, the interpreter of holy writ will bend his attention to the *STYLES*, of Scripture; which will open a field of curious and important disquisition.

If he have analyzed the nature, and studied the philosophy, of human language, he will not want to be informed, that this distinguishing prerogative of man, which the Almighty hath employed in the revelation of his will, takes its origin from the *impressions*, which sensible and material objects make, through their respective organs, upon the mind, expressed in words or vocal signs, their arbitrary but instituted representatives. He will also know, that it is by *transferring* these words or instituted signs, thus taken from sensible and material objects, to the thoughts
and

and ideas of the mind, which are inapprehensible by the senses, from a *similitude*, real or supposed, between them, that language is extended to the expression of mental and abstract subjects of whatever kind. And he will accordingly observe, that with these transferred modes of speaking, though by habit often made insensible in their use, all languages abound.

The *similitude*, which is the *means* of this extension to mental and abstracted subjects, is of two distinct and different kinds. Sometimes it is *real* and *permanent*; in which case, the transfer of the words from their primitive and material, to their secondary, meaning, is called *Analogy*: but this *similitude* is often *apparent* only, and *fluctuating*; in which case, the transfer is called a *Metaphor*. When the *similitude* is real and permanent, the analogical term, by which it is expressed, becomes the *true* representative of the thought, and is the necessary vehicle of information from one mind to another; the indirect, indeed, but the *certain*, medium, by which truth is communicated^p. But, when the

^p See Chap. iv. sect. 3. of the first volume.

similitude is only apparent or supposed, the metaphorical word, or figurative expression, is *not the true* representative of the thought, or necessary vehicle of information ; it is of a more *arbitrary, uncertain, and poetical* nature, employed, not properly to convey, but to explain, to illustrate, to heighten, to adorn, and often to conceal, the truth. Analogy is, therefore, the instrument of the understanding : Metaphor the instrument of the imagination.

However simple it may appear, this distinction of language in general, as transferred from material impressions to mental operations, forms the two general **STYLES** of holy scripture.

If, to raise human language to the mental abstraction and sublimity of their thoughts, men are under the necessity of using these indirect and figurative modes of speech, inasmuch that the frequency of the habit renders them insensible of the act ; when God, that most pure and exalted mind, totally abstracted from matter and removed from sense, communicates himself and his immortal truths to men, whose words and ideas are replete with

with sensible and material images; however he may accommodate himself to their thoughts, to their words, and to their ways, we must see the greater necessity of his language being still more replete with analogical and figurative expression.

III. Of the *Analogical* Style.

ANALOGY is the instrument of the Understanding, and forms that species of Logic, which is peculiarly appropriated to subjects of theology, in every stage of that sublime and extensive study. It is the indispensable vehicle, by which the divine truths of religion are conveyed to the view and apprehension of the human intellect.

In this dark and sublunary state, wedded to sense, immured in body, and involved in matter, of beings which are perfectly immaterial, and especially of God, that most pure and immaterial Spirit, men possess no faculties of body or soul, by which they can form any *immediate* conception. Between the visible

ble and invisible worlds an impassable gulph is fixed, an impenetrable chasm, through which one ray of celestial light cannot *directly* dart. All our information of things that are divine must, therefore, be conveyed through an *indirect* channel: and, as we have seen human language capable of being transferred, by this Analogy, from material impressions to mental subjects, and of communicating the latter with certainty and precision; so, by a similar, but higher, transfer from things which are human, material or mental, to those which are divine, it is converted into an indirect, but certain, instrument of this celestial communication. Through the medium of this *necessary* expedient alone, we are rendered capable of receiving the mysteries of religion, which, in condescension to the apprehension and capacity of men, the Deity hath graciously and abundantly employed¹.

This

¹ Vates sacri Naturam Divinam sub humanis imaginibus adumbrant, eo quod illud necessario postulet humanæ mentis imbecillitas; eoque modo, ut quæ a rebus humanis ad Deum transferuntur, nunquam proprie accipi possint. Semper remittitur intellectus ab umbra ad veritatem, neque in nuda hæret imagine, sed protinus quærit & investigat id quod

This Divine Analogy, so necessary to revelation, is founded, like the human, upon a similitude consisting in a *permanent resemblance* and *correspondent reality* between the terrestrial things and ideas, which are the direct objects of the human intellect, and those celestial truths, of which it can have no direct conception: and it is expressed by transferring the words which stand for the terrestrial things and the ideas to the celestial truths; which words are to be understood in their plain and obvious, not figurative, sense. So that the comparison is founded on something *real* as well as similar; from which real similarity, as a principle, reason deduces a just and true correspondence¹.

By means of this, which forms the ANALOGICAL STYLE of Scripture, the eternal *relations* of the glorious inhabitants of heaven are

quod in Divina natura ei imagini est *Analogum*; grandius quiddam & excelsius quam quod possit plane concipere & apprehendere, sed quod animum metu quodam & admiratione percellit. Ea enim est mentis nostræ ignorantia & cæcitas in Divinæ naturæ contemplatione, ut ejus notionem simplicem & puram nullo modo possimus attingere. Lowth. Præl. De S. P. Heb. xvi.

¹ See the first volume, p. 56.

trul y

truly and faithfully conveyed to us ; those of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* ; their actions and operations of *Creator*, *Redeemer*, *Mediator*, and *Sanctifier*. All the other mysteries of our religion are, by this analogical medium, revealed to us, as far as the revealer thought necessary, by their correspondent names and terms, as *begotten*, *proceeding*, and innumerable others ; to instance which, would lead me into a field of ample and interesting disquisition.

This language of analogy, thus real and permanent in its use, which forms the necessary style of holy scripture, however indirect, is *clearly* to be understood. When God is called the *Father*, in respect of Christ the *Son* ; what the Father is to the Son here according to the law of nature, that God is to Christ by a supernatural generation. The word *Mediator*, in its familiar use with men, means a person who, by interposing his friendly offices, reconciles those who were at variance ; and it is substituted by Analogy to represent Christ interposing, in a similar way, between God and man. And, though the manner of his

6

præternatural

præternatural generation and also of his mediatorial interposition be inconceivable by us, and perhaps ineffable ; yet the word *Son* fully and clearly informs us of his relation to the Father, and that of *Mediator*, as clearly and certainly expresses this comfortable truth—that, as one man reconciles two enemies, so men are reconciled to God the Father by the inestimable mediation of the Son.

Instead of giving men new and spiritual ideas of heavenly things, different from those they have by nature, and instead of using a spiritual language or mode of communication calculated directly to express his heavenly truths, (which would be to change their nature at once, and to make them different beings, contrary to the divine intention), this Analogy takes men as they are, and only transfers their words and ideas from earthly to heavenly subjects : by which divine and wonderful expedient, “ the invisible things of God,” in the pointed expression of St. Paul, are *clearly* seen, being “ understood by the things that are made.”

Understanding both sides of the comparison, which are equally the objects of our senses or

• Rom. i. 20.

reflection,

reflection, in human analogies, we can judge of the exact degree and proportion of the similitude: whereas, in this divine analogy, as we understand only one, that is, the earthly side, we cannot judge of the similitude at all. But we have an equivalent, more than sufficient to answer this defect, in the *veracity* of Him, whose goodness hath vouchsafed us the supernatural communication, and whose wisdom hath judged it to be sufficient. Upon this we depend, that the resemblance is certain, incapable of deceiving us, though incomprehensible by us. The same benign and gracious Being, who hath supplied us with senses by which we are not deceived, hath given us this diviner mode of information, and, since it is as necessary, and more important than they, it is as *certain*, as if we understood both sides of the similitude, or as if he had given us direct and adequate ideas of his celestial truths by a mode of communication directly adapted to them. It presents us with clear and lively representations, and we instantly infer their correspondent realities, relying, as we do, upon his truth and wisdom, and forming them, as we well may, into a foundation of our present faith and future hope.

Compared

Compared with that more direct and personal intuition of the Godhead, which we may be admitted to enjoy in future and more perfect stages of our existence, “when this “mortal shall have put on immortality,” this analogical view of things may be, as St. Paul expresses it, through the medium “of a glass “darkly and ænigmatically.” But, though we see nothing in a glass of the real substance of a man, we have an exact view of his image, which implies the existence of a correspondent body: so, in this analogical mirror of divine truth, we sufficiently behold the fair image of the Lord, and those stupendous realities of the invisible world with which we are concerned, without having the whole of the “great mystery of godliness” unveiled at once, till we be changed and prepared for its enjoyment.

By this method of divine revelation, so *necessary*, so *real*, so *clear*, and *certain*, the Almighty bowed the heavens and came down, in wonderful condescension, to the blindness and imperfection of human reason; speaking to us of
himself,

himself, in our own ideas and words, with the utmost familiarity, “ as a man speaketh “ with his friend’;” and enabling us to think and to speak of him, as far as we are concerned, with all reverence and adoration, but with as much ease and certainty, as of each other. ‘ In the explication of his mysteries,’ says our divine philosopher, ‘ God vouchsafeth to descend to the weakness of our capacity, so expressing and unfolding them to us, as they may be best comprehended by us, inoculating, as it were, his revelations upon the conceptions and notions of our reason; and so applying his inspirations to open our understanding, as the figure of a key is fitted to the wards of a lock. We ought not, however, on this account, to be wanting to ourselves; for, seeing God makes use of the faculty and functions of reason in his divine illuminations, we ought every way to improve the same, in order that we may be more capable to receive and entertain such holy mysteries’.

‘ Exodus xxxiii. 11.

‘ Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ix. cap. 1.

Viewing it as the wonderful expedient, to which we owe that enlargement and extension of the human mind; without which the stupendous truths of revelation would for ever remain at a distance from our sublimest apprehension, and as inconceivable by us as if they had no existence; and without which the Deity himself would be very erroneously and obscurely known, the interpreter of the bible will pay particular attention to the ANALOGIC STYLE. He will acknowledge a just idea of it to be of the last importance in forming a right conception of the Christian mysteries, or however in preventing a wrong conception. He will allow its importance in prescribing just limits to the human understanding, and in determining the proper office of reason in the interpretation of the holy scriptures. He will look up with solemn admiration to that divine method of communication, by which the Almighty bowed his divinity to the earth, to raise the human mind to heaven; by which he introduced us to an acquaintance with those objects, of which we are incapable of an immediate view, till, this earthly tabernacle being dissolved, we shall be ad-

VOL. II.

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mitted

mitted "behind the veil," to "behold them face to face." When that great change, which we are taught by this analogical intercourse to expect, shall come, we shall be advanced to higher capacities of knowledge and enjoyment, to the more immediate vision and fruition of the Deity; though, in our nearest approaches towards him, we shall remain unequal to the immensurable power and wisdom of the glory of God^v. "When we all, as with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the

^v "Even the highest order of angels, cherubim or seraphim, must probably have a method of forming conceptions of God and his perfections, which do not come up to direct and immediate perceptions; such as they have of one another and of all heavenly objects, and such as we now have of things human and material. Their manner of conceiving the divine perfections, and of communing about them with one another, may probably be through the lively transcript of them in their own nature [from their great archetype and creator: So that they think and discourse about them with one another, if I may so speak, as we do; but from inconceivably more elevated and exact representations of them which they find in themselves: which is but a kind of *Analogy* still, though such as hath a much nearer foundation or proportion of similitude than ours. And though it is a strain of divine knowledge

“ the same image, from glory to glory, as
“ by the Spirit of the Lord ”.

IV. Of the PARABOLICAL Style.

METAPHOR is the instrument of the Imagination, that inventive faculty to which we have assigned the province of Poetry¹.

In the analysis of Poetic art, that species, of which *Words* are the materials, though less exact and perfect in its imitations than the other arts, was found to exceed them greatly in extent and operation². But, however effective and superior poetical words may be, being incapable of all imitation which is direct and proper³, the *similitude* which they
“ knowledge in them vastly transcending the farthest reach
“ of all our capacities, and may for ever successively receive
“ a gradual increase and improvement; yet probably it will
“ never come up to a *direct and immediate intuition* of the
“ divine Nature as it is in itself.”

Butler's Div. Analogy, p. 40.

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

² See p. 268 of the first volume.

³ See chap. xii. sect. 2. of *ibid.*

⁴ See p. 282, 283, of *ibid.*

132 *The Chart and Scale*

express, and in which consists their poetic virtue, is, in every view, very different from that which is analogical; as it is applicable to a very different use. It is only the *fictitious* resemblance, and *arbitrary* invention, of the poet, for the production of different effects.

From the difference of these effects, which are the ends of Poetry, it is divided into four general kinds, and according to the different means employed—Descriptive, Narrative, Dramatical, and Parabolical. Of these kinds the last, though the least direct and proper in its imitations^a, has been supereminently distinguished by being more particularly consecrated to the service of religion. ‘Parabolical poetry,’ according to an observation of Lord Bacon, ‘excels among the rest, and appears to be a sacred and venerable thing; as religion herself makes use of its assistance, by which she maintains an intercourse between divine and human things^b.’

As words were at first employed to convey a meaning in the immediate act of speaking;

^a See p. 285 of the first volume.

^b De Augm. Sc. lib. ii. cap. xiii.

so,

so, to convey it at a distance or to record it, *pictures* were employed in the act of writing. Again, as words, in order to convey mental operations and abstract ideas, were converted into *metaphors*; these figures, for correspondent purposes, were converted into *symbols*, or standing signs, expressive of mental emotions or poetical ideas, first, by marking down their natural shape, as the figure of a *horn* for *strength*, and then, by using the word answering to the symbol, either in speaking or in writing, to stand for the general idea. Thus, by the addition of symbolical to metaphorical expression, in all their variety, figurative language was increased to a vast extent^c. Such is the origin and nature of the PARABOLICAL STYLE, which, by the various inventive address of the imagination in tracing poetical similitudes of different kinds, and applying them to different purposes, was diversified and extended into all the forms of parable, allusion, allegory, comparison or

^c De genere figurato jam dicturus, video mihi pœne infinitam rerum materiam, & immensum quendam campum patere. Lowth Heb. Præl. v.

similitude, apologue, imagery, symbol, personification, and representative action^d.

This style, which originated in necessity, was at length converted to use and ornament. Under its dark and ænigmatical veil, the knowledge of earliest ages was propagated, and its wisdom concealed. The priest inculcated his doctrines through the medium of mysterious rites; under the cover of allegory the philosopher couched his science; the legislator and the moralist conveyed their instructions by proverbs and parables; and, by a well-invented and consistent fiction, in which every species of poetical expression and imagery was interwoven, the poet delighted and informed mankind.

^d Per Dictionem Figuratam eam intelligo, qua una pluresque Voces vel Imagines in aliarum locum transferuntur, aut etiam aliis illustrandis inserviunt, ex aliqua quam cum iis habent *Similitudine*. Ea similitudo, si innuitur tantum, fit *Metaphora*, si oratione continuata, Dicitur *Allegoria*: si aperte exprimitur, collatis inter se utrisque imaginibus, fit *Comparatio*: fundatur etiam in ejusmodi Similitudine *Prosopœia*, cum vel rebus fictis aut sensu carentibus datur *actus & Persona*, vel cum veræ Personæ probabilis *Oratio* tribuitur. Lowth Heb. Præl. v.

Agreeably

Agreeably to this method of instruction, which prevailed in the eastern nations and in ancient times, the dispensation of religion was conducted. So various is the texture and composition of the poetic style employed by the sacred writers in almost every part of the holy scriptures, excepting in that which is historical, to answer important ends of the inspirer. These ends may be divided into two general kinds: the one common to them with all other poets, to *illustrate*, to *adorn*, and to *exalt*, the subject: the other proper and peculiar to themselves, to *conceal* and to *conceal* their meaning, in a way as singular as essential to the religious dispensation, of which it was the instrument. These different ends are frequently mixed and involved in the same scriptural passage or expression: they should, however, be distinguished as far as possible by all critics and interpreters of holy writ; and the latter should be holden in constant and awful recollection.

* Etenim Dictionis Figuratae, id consilium, ea vis, ut Imaginibus aliunde translatis res vel *evidentius* ac *clarius*, vel *grandius* atque *elatus* exprimantur. Lowth Heb. Præl. v.

We have an excellent critique on the *Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, from the pen of a late very learned and ingenious prelate, which was delivered in a lecture from a professorial chair in this university. The work is bold and magnanimous in the design, tempered withal with that circumspective caution suggested by so awful and sublime a subject: and, in the execution, it is difficult to determine, whether a refinement of critical judgment, or an elegance of classical language, predominates the most. The object of the elegant author of this admirable performance was not to establish the principles of scriptural interpretation for the use of the theologist; but only to recommend, with the most pious and benevolent intention, the beautiful poems of the Hebrews to the poetical taste and classical genius of his academical auditors, in order to invite them to the study of the holy scriptures.^f Whilst we see the first of the above-mentioned ends of the Poetic Style dis-

^f Ut meminerim me, non Theologiæ studiosis divinæ veritatis oracula exponere, sed juventuti in politiori doctrina & literarum elegantiss exercitata commendare lectissima poemata. Præl. ii.

played,

played, in this celebrated work, with all the acumen of criticism and minuteness of discrimination; we find the second, which is the more particular and important, almost entirely overlooked. In consequence of which inattention to this appropriate end of scripture style, we have to lament, that, with the purest and most liberal intention, this learned author inadvertently led himself and others into a method of criticism injurious to the right interpretation of the holy scriptures. By this method of criticism, the sacred volume has, in all respects, been brought too much upon a level with human compositions, and its structure, as well as meaning, is too much judged of and decided by their standard.

In this opinion, I think, I am supported both by the design and execution of the work.

It is distributed into three parts. The first treats of the *Metre* of the Hebrew Poetry; and to the remark, however just, that whether founded in truth or not it is ingenious and plausible at least, I have only to rejoin, that, by bringing to the poetry of the Hebrews his ideas of Metre from the Grecian, Roman, and other poetry of more modern date, which
may

may uniformly be in measured verse, he too hastily concluded, that the *poetry*, and his own vague idea of the *metre*, of the ancient scriptures were co-extensive. By this decision, he excludes all those parts, which are not thus metrical, out of the poetic province; abridging thereby the *Parabolical*, which is, indeed, the *Prophetic* style*. In consequence of this confined idea of the Hebrew Poetry, he excludes the whole book of Daniel from being poetical and parabolical, and of course, from being prophetic; for, without its proper vehicle, prophecy cannot exist.

The second part is on the *Style of the Hebrew Poetry*, in which, after a dissertation on what he calls the *Sententious* kind, he proceeds to the *Figurative*, which properly forms the *Parabolical*, Style. He gives a formal specification of the different ends it has in view, to *explain* and to *illustrate*, to *aggrandize* and *exalt*, the subject; in which, it is remarkable that he has totally omitted the peculiar and appropriate end of the figurative style, to *conceal* the meaning^h. In

* See the preliminary Dissertation to his *Isaiah*.

^h See the fifth Praelection.

this part he has given a display of the figures of rhetorical diction, of the *Metaphor* in all its variety of poetic imagery; of the *Allegory* and *Parable*; and, in the eleventh lecture, he treats of the *Mystic Allegory* with great ability; in which, he certainly attends a little to the second or specific end of the Parabolical Style, as adapted to the purpose of prophetic concealment: but this attention is only partial and incidental, and confined to one single figure. He then proceeds to the different kinds of *Comparison*, *Prosopopæia*, or *Personification*; and employs four lectures on the *sublimity of Diction*, *Conceptions*, and *Affections*.

In the last part, he gives a minute and critical analysis of the *various species of Hebrew or Prophetic Poetry*, as they assimilate and accord with the various kinds of classical composition; the *Elegy*, the *Didactic poem*, the *Ode*, the *Hymn*, the *Dramatic Poem*; excluding out of the poetical calendar the whole books of *Daniel* and *Jonah*¹.

The whole of this celebrated performance is, therefore, a critique of sacred Poetry by the

¹ Præl. xx.

standard

standard of profane ; it is to judge of divine, by human, compositions. And, so far as this kind of criticism may be fairly and justly employed upon a book of most solemn and superior import, which is professedly concealed in its expressions and mysterious in many parts, with a view of displaying those poetical ends which may be common to it and other poetical fictions, this work is entitled to the praise which has been bestowed upon it. But where can we exactly draw the line ? It deserves to be well and maturely weighed, how far a sacred critic may go in displaying these classical ends, and in judging of the poetical means employed, without intruding on the rights, and infringing the privileges, of that other end which is properly divine, and peculiarly adapted to the purpose of holy scripture. The very pious and ingenious author of the *Prelections* seems, indeed, to be occasionally arrested in the midst of his critical career, by this awful reflection ; as if he were sensible that he might be sometimes treading with a profane step on holy ground.

Without paying sufficient attention, as a theologian, to that vast system of prophecy interwoven,

interwoven, by means of the Parabolical Style in all its variety and extent, through the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures, he indulged the critic with great freedom, and indeed, ability: and, it need not offend the numerous admirers of this able author, of which number I profess myself to be one, if I say that this celebrated work betrays more of the classic than of the divine. After the example of a Longinus, and with the acumen of an Aristotle, his object was to display the various and distinctive characters of the sacred poets in the Sententious, the Figurative, and the Sublime, to illustrate their specific qualities, and to trace the peculiar effects which they are calculated to produce on the imagination and affections. With such an intention, the Professor of Poetry chose a field of criticism for the subject of his lectures, as fruitful as it was novel; in which his classical genius expatiated with equal taste and judgment. But he overlooked the great end which the inspirer of this poetry had principally in view, and which puts a restraint on our judgment in deciding upon these other; and he has confined the Parabolical Style within limits which
are

are hypothetical and too much contracted: for, independently upon the metre and other fanciful qualifications, all scripture language, that is *indirect*, whether speaking by parables, visions, dreams, or representative actions, is Parabolical, and capable of concealing a prophetic meaning. He acknowledges the intimate connection between *Prophecy* and *Poetry* in the Hebrew Scriptures, and considers them as the joint dictate of the Hôly Spirit^k; and it is difficult to conjecture why he has dwelt so partially and incidentally on this prophetic end of Poetry: unless it be, that by allowing its full weight in the writings of inspiration, he would have blunted the edge of that inventive conjecture and critical refinement, in which his genius so much delighted, and in which he has so liberally indulged.

Considering the holy scriptures as different from all other books, both in their origin

^k Ex quibus omnibus satis liquet, veterum Hebræorum sententia cum Poetica Prophetiam arcta quadam societate & cognatione conjunctam fuisse. Utriusque facultatis idem erat nomen; eadem quippe origo, idem auctor, Spiritus Sanctus, &c. Præl. xviii.

and

and intention, the theologist will check the career of his classical and sentimental criticism, however elegant and ingenious it may be, to bend his intention to the mysterious and appropriate end of the Parabolic style. He will awfully bear in mind, that a vast and various chain of *Prophecy* was employed by the omniscient dictator of religion as its concomitant and standing evidence: for the conveyance of which from age to age, to the most distant periods of futurity, he will observe an amazing texture of the most astonishing *concealment* interwoven in every part of the religious dispensation, from its earliest annunciation down to its final close, when the Spirit of Prophecy withdrew from men his special communications. This texture he will discover to be wrought together with the most intricate and consummate art, calculated to answer the private, but important, ends of the Inspirer. He will see, that the *Poetic* or *Parabolic* diction, in its full latitude and extent, was the divine instrument, under which the Holy Spirit couched his prophetic intentions: and he will allow, that this was the main, and indeed, the adequate purpose, for which

which it is so much more abundantly employed in the holy scriptures, than in any other book. He will think, that fanciful and sentimental criticism, even if it could be employed with the utmost safety and without the least presumption, is a very trifling and inferior office, when compared with that of the sacred interpreter engaged in a learned investigation of the artful structure of this style, which, however various, is uniform and consistent, by comparing one part with another, in order to develop the secret intention of the Spirit of Prophecy as it comes to be evolved in the prophetical event.

He will acknowledge two different causes of this Parabolical concealment, the one special, and the other general. The prophecies of the Old Testament were delivered under a temporary and inferior dispensation preparatory to the establishment of one which was to be perpetual and more perfect. They were, therefore, concealed, that the temporary œconomy might not be disgraced in the ideas of those who were to live and to serve God under it, by holding up too clear a view of the brighter glory of that which was to follow.

“ For,

“ For that ministration which was made
 “ glorious, had no glory in this respect, by
 “ reason of that other glory which excel-
 “ leth*.” For the express purpose of hiding
 from their view the abolition of the Law,
 and of preventing them from being lost to its
 observance in the too earnest anticipation of
 the Gospel, ‘ Moses put a veil over his face,
 ‘ that they could not steadfastly look to the
 ‘ end of that which was to be abolished †.’
 And, to this special cause of concealment, he
 will add another which is general: for, the
 completion of prophecy being left in the in-
 strumentality of free-agents, if the predic-
 tions were not thus concealed, such a restraint
 would be put upon the human will in their
 fulfilment, as to destroy the nature of man;
 or human obstinacy would be tempted to coun-
 teract the intent of providence, and thereby
 destroy the purpose of God. But, under the
 cover of this parabolical veil, the Almighty is
 turning the actions, the errors, and the vices,
 of men into the secret instruments of his de-
 sign. On that greatest of prophetic events,
 the crucifixion of his son, the ancient pro-
 phets are so full and clear, that it is difficult

* 2 Cor. iii. 10.

† 2 Cor. iii. 13.

146. *The Chart and Scale*

to conceive how the persons, by whom it was executed, could be ignorant of what they did. Yet that they were ignorant, we know from his own authority, “ Father forgive them ; “ they know not what they do¹ :” and St. Peter told them afterward, “ That through “ ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers ; “ but the things that God had before shewed “ by the mouth of his prophets, that Christ “ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled^m.”

And the same Parabolical diction was employed by Christ and his Apostles, in their prophetic character, for the purpose of couching under its veil his mystical doctrines, exalted precepts, and prophetical anticipations.

The Parabolical Style of holy Scripture, in the different forms which it assumes, is that important and extensive subject, which solicits the virtuous study of the theologist, and which, independently of the important end of his profession, promises to reward his labour by gratifying a sublime and laudable curiosity. In every stage of the investigation, he will be filled with solemn admiration, as he traces the consummate art, and contemplates the wonderful address, of the Inspirer,

¹ Luke xxiii. 34.

^m Acts iii. 17, 18.

in

in couching the prophetic meaning under such general descriptions, different senses, symbols, allegories, images, representations, dreams, and visions, as were as mysterious as possible till the anticipated event arrived, and as obvious as possible, when that took place.

Poetry consists of *generals*^a; by the use of which, prophetic enunciations exhibit only the outlines of things, as of pictures sketched out, but with such an exquisite pencil, that nothing but the events themselves are able to fill up and to adjust the particular features, or to give a finishing hand to the celestial portraits. The general outline is, indeed, clearly and distinctly marked by the prophet; but, to give it all its personal and distinctive traits, is left to the unerring hand of time. Whatever is predicted in such general terms, however clearly expressed, must remain an impenetrable secret, till the prophetic event arrive with its adjuncts, circumstances, and exact occurrences, to disclose it°. “And the Lord
“ answered

^a See page 279, 280 of the first volume.

• Quod si Prophetiæ ipsius indoles in extremis tantum rerum lineamentis effingendis & in generalibus affectionibus describendis amplificandisque, præcipue versetur; exinde

“ answered and said, Write the vision and
 “ make it plain upon tables, that he may run
 “ that readeth it. For the vision is yet for
 “ an appointed time, and at the end it shall
 “ speak and not lye: though it tarry, wait
 “ thou for it; because it will surely come, it
 “ will not tarry ^p.”

The *double sense* of prophecy implying the accomplishment of the prediction in more events than one, in the same system of religious dispensation, but in different periods and parts of it, is, doubtless, of great and general application. “ The testimony of
 “ Jesus was the spirit of prophecy¹;” the end and object of the prophetic dispensation. A temporary œconomy was introduced preparatory to the introduction of his gospel, affording a convenient vehicle of the prophetic enunciations, by which they were at once safely conveyed and effectually concealed.

fatis intelligi potest, primo, quanto cum suo emolumento Poesi adjutrice & administra utatur, quamque ad omnes suas rationes accomodatam habeat dictionem Parabolicam, cujus ea natura est, ut magnam præbeat copiam & varietatem communium imaginum quibus aliqua materies late ampleque in universum exornari possit. Lowth, Præl. xx.

^p Habakkuk ii. 2, 3.

¹ Rev. xix. 10.

One sense was made to look at the immediate objects and concerns of that temporal, though theocratic, polity; whilst the other was preluding to Christ, to the nature, offices, and establishment, of his spiritual kingdom. The same expressions, which, in their first and more literal signification, intended the fate and fortunes of the Jewish state, adumbrated, in their second and figurative sense, the character and the successes of the Christian church. Future and more illustrious events were signified in preceding and less important transactions. Under the civil predictions the spiritual were couched: which different objects were accomplished by the help of a figurative and poetic language, capable of enlarging or contracting itself as circumstances, in either case, required.

This method of prophetic concealment the elegant author of the *Prelections* has treated with great perspicuity of language, and exactness of discrimination; though, perhaps, on too confined a scale. With a judicious caution and ingenuous reserve, he acknowledges the great difficulty and danger of judging and criticizing upon a subject so pro-

feffedly involved in mystery'. But the Myftic Allegory is by no means the only fpecies of Parabolical diction employed by the Spirit of Prophecy to conceal its predictive enunciations. Various images and visions were indirectly ufed; and, often, where the predictions are not couched under thefe, but delivered as in a plain narration of facts, as in the prophecy of Jonah, or in oratorical ftyle, like many predictions of Ezekiel, or in a mixture of both, like the whole of Daniel, the language is fome way or other *indirect*, and of courfe *poetical*, in its extended fignification: or elfe, where the expreffion is *direct*^s, the fame obfcurity is effected, by giving it a concealed and ænigmatic caft.

So various and complicated is the art employed by the Spirit of Prophecy in the holy fcriptures, to conceal, from the moft diftant apprehenfions of the human mind, the mean-

' Verum Allegoriæ Myfticæ leges ullas hæc in parte conftituere & perquam difficile, & fortaffe etiam temerarium, &c. Præl. xi.

Verum de hoc genere non eft fas fperare, quin in nonnullis magna fubfit obfcuritas, quæ non folum ipfam rei naturam confequitur, fed fuam habet utilitatem, &c. Ibid.

* See Ezekiel xii. 13, and Jeremiah xxxiv. 3.

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ing of its predictions, till they come to be unriddled by the events; which should put a just restraint on criticism in judging and deciding upon the words of this mysterious book.

In one part of his work, the author of the *Prelections* acknowledges the *free* and *singular* genius of sacred poetry, which is possessed of a boldness and eccentricity repugnant of all rule[†]: and he has assigned, in another, the important reason, because it resulted from the impulse of the Spirit that inspired[‡]. If, to these just observations, he had added the authority of St. Peter, that “ Prophecy never
“ came by the will of man; but holy men
“ of old spake as they were moved by the
“ Spirit of God[‡]:” these arguments might have induced him to attribute more to the divine agency in moulding the language of the

[†] Per omnia in verbis sensibusque sua quædam vis atque audacia, nullis mancipata legibus, liberum Hebrææ Poeseos genium unice spirans. Præl. x.

[‡] Quod ad rerum ordinem ac dispositionem attinet, formamque legitimam, quæ in hac specie integrum Poema conficiat; nihil sane statui potest quod in universum videatur obtinere. Soluta plerumque, ut potest, & libera, suo impetu fertur, nullas servans leges, sed materiæ rationem sequens, & Divini Spiritus impulsus. Præl. xx.

[‡] 2 Pet. i. 21.

prophets to its celestial purpose. This might have smothered, in the birth, that spirit of criticism, of which he was the father; and which, in the hands of others more adventurous, and less judicious, than himself, hath dishonoured, I had almost said, disgraced, the volume of inspiration^w.

Instead

^w This very learned and ingenious prelate, to whom the holy scriptures are much indebted for delivering them from the rabbinical prejudices by which they had been for ages entangled and obscured, who with a great share of biblical learning united a correct and classical taste, endeavoured in his Prelections to open the sacred volume to the more general study of our academical youth, by giving them a taste of their superior beauties, in a critique similar to those which had been so successfully written on the heathen poets.

‘ Enimvero quid est cur Homeri, Pindari, Horatii scriptis
 ‘ celebrandis immoramur, Mosem interea, Davidem, Isaiam,
 ‘ silentio præterimus? An id tandem statuendum est, eo-
 ‘ rum quidem hominum scripta, qui tantum modo effece-
 ‘ runt, quantum ingenio & facultate consequi potuerunt,
 ‘ ratione & via tractare oportere, & ad artis præscriptum
 ‘ & normam exigere: quæ vero altiore habent originem, &
 ‘ Divini Spiritus afflatui vere tribuuntur, eorum vim etiam
 ‘ & venustatem suo lumine quodammodo elucere; sed nec
 ‘ doctrinæ institutis constare nec Artis finibus circumscribi
 ‘ posse? Quamvis igitur ad occultos hujusce veluti Nili
 ‘ cœlestis fontes haud fas est penetrare, licebit tamen sancti
 ‘ fluminis cursum & flexiones sequi, aquarum auctus &
 ‘ recessus

Instead of indulging his genius in a vain and visionary criticism, founded on classical and

‘ recessus notare, ac rivos etiam quosdam tanquam in
‘ subjacentes campos deducere.’ [Præl. ii.] The design
is plausible, and that plausibility considerably increased by
the flowers of diction. But the only plan upon which it
can be executed, is upon the *Supposition* that though the
Spirit of Prophecy supplied the matter, the manner and the
language were left to the natural genius of the inspired.
‘ Alterum impetum mentis vocat Longinus το περι ιας
‘ νοησεις αδρεπηβολον; alterum το σφοδρον και ενθουσιαστικον.
‘ παθος, appellat. Utrumque ita in hoc argumento usur-
‘ pamus, atque ita Sacris Valibus attribimus, ut nihil de-
‘ rogemus Divini Spiritus afflatui: etsi suam interea *pro-*
‘ *priae cujusque scriptoris naturæ atque ingenio* concedamus.
‘ Neque enim instinctu divino ita comitatur Vatis animus,
‘ ut *protinus obruatur Hominis indoles*: attolluntur & eri-
‘ guntur, non extinguuntur aut occultantur naturalis ur-
‘ genii facultates; & quanquam Mosis, Davidis, and Isaïæ
‘ scripta semper spirent quiddam tam excelsum tamque
‘ cœleste, ut plane videantur divinitus edita, nihilo tamen
‘ minus in iis Mosem, Davidem, & Isaïam semper agnos-
‘ camus.” [Præl. xvi.] But, even if we admit the suppo-
sition in part, the important question occurs, How far
is it to go? What human critic shall determine that the
Holy Spirit had *no influence at all* upon the *manner* or the
language of the prophet, in which his annunciations were
delivered? Or what human critic shall say precisely *how*
far his afflatus was concerned? What human critic shall
draw the line between the *Inspirer* and the *Man*? The
different

and sentimental taste, the sober theologian will find himself more useful employment in developing

different and characteristic styles of Moses, David, and Isaiah, will go a very little way, if any at all, to this important decision: for, when the Spirit employs human instruments, he takes them as they are, and by the act of employing them he makes them his own; so that, whether Amos spoke as a shepherd, or David as a king, they uttered the words of God.

These difficulties beset this ingenious critic, and all his management and address felt themselves unable to surmount them: and, at a time that biblical learning was making so laudable a progress under his auspice, it is great pity, that he let loose this critical refinement upon the sacred scriptures. Though that discreet and cautious judgment, by which he was distinguished, kept his pen within moderate bounds, the high reputation which the novelty and plausibility of the undertaking conferred upon the work, the distinguished eminence of the person, and the fascinating elegance of his language, produced their effect on the minds of others in stimulating them to an imitation of his method, in order to participate his fame; who, possessing less of his ingenuity and high classical taste, in which the chief value of the work consists, could only distinguish themselves by an outrage of its faults. Mounted upon this critical Pegasus, an eminent professor in an university renowned of late for biblical learning, goes on, ‘ And if the poet Ezekiel has here and there *overloaded* his subject with ornaments, we shall be unable to refuse our admiration to his genius notwithstanding these *defects*.—It almost seems that the Poet
‘ himself

loping the various methods of concealment furnished by the Parabolical Style, from principles

‘ himself felt the *hurtful consequences* of his ample representations; under this *he endeavoured to prevent them* by first giving a general sketch, and then every thing more determinate and in detail. But I doubt whether *he has thus prevented them*. This method is rather productive of another *hurtful consequence*; that he occasionally seems to *correct himself, but really does not*; that he occasionally seems to *retract* something, which, when accurately considered, is not the fact. The Author of the Revelation, whose poetry is in the same style with that of Ezekiel, and full of imagination, for the most part has avoided the *rocks* on which his predecessor *stranded*; and for the most part has happily cut off the *wild shoots of a heated imagination*. He also has fictions and giant-forms: but he has produced them only so far as to give the reader a full image before his eyes; he does not pursue them minutely,—and he does not *distraet or pain* his reader. But as Ezekiel describes, designs, paints, and exhausts all minutiae, he sometimes *injures his poems*. According to my feeling, *he should have broken off* after he had given the chariot-throne, restless wheels, and cherubim full of living motions; but, as he continues to describe the motion of the throne by his wonderful forms, he makes *unpleasing impressions*. Even where these consequences do not arise from the *prolix details* of the Prophet, he is *mised* by them to other *faults* which are equally striking. They sometimes carry him to things which are *unnatural*. Thus he has acted against nature in *slaying what is not food*. How
 ‘ much

ciples contained in scripture; in analyzing and arranging the different kinds of prophecy; and

‘ much superior is Isaiah in a similar representation! And
 ‘ should not the great profusion of learning in the Elegy
 ‘ and funeral lamentation over Tyre, when she was destroyed, *be quite removed from this piece?* On the contrary, it was a happy invention that his lofty Poems are
 ‘ sometimes interrupted by short speeches. They are not
 ‘ only useful for the illustration of his symbols, but also for
 ‘ the repose of the mind. By this change his readers are
 ‘ agreeably entertained; and their imagination finds resting
 ‘ places, so as to soar more easily after the imagination of
 ‘ the Poet. Ezekiel, therefore, remains a great Poet, full
 ‘ of originality notwithstanding his faults; and, in my opinion,
 ‘ whoever censures him as if he were only an imitator of the old prophets, can never feel his power.’
 Eickhorn’s Introd. to his Old Testament. See Newcome’s Introduction to Ezekiel, p. 24, 25, 26.

Had this learned Professor indulged his critical cavallo in trampling so unmercifully upon the works of the Great Poet who feigned the ten years siege of Troy, as freely as he has done upon those of the prophet, who announced the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, who “ saw the vision of God,” [Ezekiel, 1 Chap.] and spoke the “ words of Jehovah,” he would have been most deservedly torn to pieces by a whole host of critics.—The impetus of this critic is neither the *το αδρεπτηβολον*, nor the *το ενδυσιαστικον*, it is surely the *το μανιακον, παθος*.

Without employing his critical abilities the judicious Mr. Addison is only a distant and humble admirer. ‘ As
 ‘ the

and in unravelling the great “mystery of

‘the Jewish nation produced men of great genius, without considering them as inspired writers, they have transmitted to us many hymns and divine odes, which excel those that are delivered down to us by the Greeks and Romans, in the poetry, as much as in the subject to which it was consecrated.’ *Spectator*, No. 453.

And, perhaps, the general idea of scripture poetry given by a French writer is still more just, because it does not separate the poetry from the inspiration. ‘It is the true language of poetry, of prophecy and of revelation: a celestial fire animates and transports it. What ardour in its odes! What sublime images in the visions of Isaiah! How pathetic and affecting are the tears of Jeremiah! One there finds beauties and models of every kind. Nothing is more capable than this language of elevating a poetic spirit; and we do not fear to assert that the Bible, superior to Homer and Virgil in many places, can inspire still more than they that rare and singular genius which is the portion of those who dedicate themselves to poetry.’ And this learned Frenchman might have added the reason of this superiority, by attributing it to its true cause, the Inspirer himself.

Our great philosopher is decided upon the question. ‘*Alter autem interpretandi modus, quem pro excessu statuimus, videtur primo intuitu sobrius & castus, sed tamen & scripturas ipsas dedecorat & plurimo ecclesiam detrimendo officit. Is est, ut verbo dicam, quando scripturæ divinitus inspiratæ eodem quo humana scripta, explicantur modo.*’ *Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ix.*

“godliness,”

“godliness,” by affording predictions with events, and types with anti-types*.

Much of the obscurity in which the prophetic writings were involved at their first delivery is now dispelled; and a new field of investigation is opened to the theologist†. Although the prophetic system, that vast and

* Tale esse debet hujus operis institutum, ut cum singulis ex scripturis prophetiis eventuum veritas conjungatur, idque per omnes mundi ætates, tum ad confirmationem fidei, tum ad instituendam disciplinam quandam & peritiam in interpretatione prophetiarum, quæ adhuc restant complendæ, &c.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ii. cap. xi.

† Equidem in Vaticiniis contra fit ac in cæteris omnibus Sacræ Poeseos partibus; illa tum sunt maxime obscura, cum primum sunt edita; quæque aliis tenebras inducit, illis infert lucem, vetustas. Adeoque ista obscuritas, quæ in hoc genere ab initio infederat, aliqua ex parte jam tollitur: multa sunt, quæ explicavit ipsius rei eventus, certissima oraculorum interpretes: multa, quibus Divinus ille Spiritus, ea quæ primum induxerat involucra, dignatus est detrahare; plerisque aliquam lucem intulit ejusdem sacratissimis Institutionibus clarius illustrata Religionum Judaicarum ratio. Ita fit, ut, quæ pars Sacræ Poeseos & singularem quandam naturam & maximam in se difficultatem habet, ad eam tamen cognoscendam & perspicendam meliore jam conditione accedamus, iis subsidiis & adminiculis instructi, quibus plane veteres Hebræi, quæque nec ipsis quidem Vatribus Dei internunciis concessa sunt. Lowth. Præl. xi.

various

various apparatus arranged by the invifible hand of Him, “ with whom one day is as a “ thoufand years, and a thoufand years as “ one day,” for the testimony of his Son, may not be entirely evolved, till the prefent material fyftem be deftroyed ; time, by interpreting many predictions in their correspondent events, hath fupplied fuch grounds of analogic reasoning, as will lead us to the ftructure and œconomy of prophetic language, and prepare us to acknowledge the accomplifhment of others, when their events arrive. However intentionally myfterious, the Parabolical Style is *uniform* and *confiftent*, and of courfe *reducible to rule* ; one part fupplying the key to another. It was the common mode of writing at the time the prophecies were delivered, and is conftituted on fuch general principles, as make it a fubject of rational inveftigation. Another key is, therefore, to be found by a learned and diligent fearch in the archives of ancient and oriental learning ; in the images of the eaftern and weftern poets ; in the fubfifting monuments of Egyptian hieroglyphics, from which all eaftern writings took its fymbolic caft ; in thofe
pagan

pagan ceremonies and superstitions, which drew their origin from the Jewish; and, above all, in the holy scriptures themselves, which, however the productions of many different pens, employ the same symbols, images, and other figures, which were intended by their one omniscient dictator to be interpreters of each other.

By an extensive comparison of words with words, phrases with phrases, and metaphors with metaphors, the judicious interpreter may hope to develop the prophetic meaning which is designedly and artfully concealed, in order that, among other reasons of the Inspirer, it might afford a virtuous and sublime employment to the human mind. And, if instead of wasting their labour in the fabrication of hypothetical system, their learning in disputation, and their ingenuity in critical refinement, learned men would, by an extensive induction and judicious arrangement of particulars collected out of the Bible and other monuments of antiquity, supply the theological student with some *general rules* or principles of interpretation, (which is a great desideratum in Theology,) they would bring an offering

offering most useful to the cause of scriptural learning*.

Whilst other proofs of his religion are weakened and obscured by time, this of Prophecy, which challenges the particular cultivation of the student, is gathering strength and clearness and gratifying him with an immediate and personal conviction: and, as in this important department of his theological study, his application will be, at the same time, made to history, whilst he is growing in conviction, he will derive a sublime and endearing enjoyment from contemplating the wonders of providence and the ways of men.

Thus we see the province of IMAGINATION, that exalted faculty of the human

* Something of this kind has been done by the learned Daubuz in the *Preliminary Discourse and Symbolical Dictionary* introductory to his commentary on the Revelations. In 1730, Mr. Lancaster *abridged and new-modelled* this learned work in a quarto volume dedicated to Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford, hoping that, under the patronage of so great a name, so valuable a work would have met with a general reception. It has, however, shared the fate of many of the best of books, to be known by very few, whilst many of the worst are in the libraries and hands of all.

VOL. II.

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mind,

mind, by which its affections are sublimed and qualified for the imitation of the goodness, the adoration of the wisdom, and the admiration of the power, of God, extensively employed in the act of revealing his will to men, forming that indirect and poetical vehicle through which the truths and evidences of his religion are conveyed. ‘In matters of faith and religion,’ says Lord Bacon, ‘the Imagination is elevated above Reason. Not that divine illumination resideth in the Imagination, (nay rather in the highest tower of the mind and understanding); but, as in moral virtues divine Grace uses the motives of the *Will*; so in illuminations it makes use of the *Imagination*: which is the cause that religion hath ever sought an access to the mind through similitudes, types, parables, visions, and dreams’.

* De Augm. Sc. lib. v. c. 1.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Of the PARTICULAR INTERPRETATION of
the Holy Scriptures.

THOUGH dictated and written in human language, as the indispensable instrument of communication, by which the Testimony of God is conveyed to men; that the Sacred Volume, in *manner* as well as in matter, is *different* from all other books, is a theological axiom, which has, I hope, been sufficiently established in the preceding pages. This will have a powerful influence upon the particular study and interpretation of that mysterious book.

Other books contain the things that are ‘on earth,’ the observations and reasonings of men on material objects, their thoughts and reasonings on mental subjects, their testimony of facts and occurrences, and their poetical imitations; in a language as *direct* as it can be, and, when figurative, intended to be

M 2

plain:

plain: This book contains ‘ the things that ‘ are in heaven;’ in a language, which is analogical and *indirect*, and which is often figurative and intended to be *concealed*.

Whilst we view with pleasure the study of the Holy Scriptures shaking off the fetters of hypothetical system, and moving on in a more free and philosophical direction ; whilst we rejoice to see the science of Theology liberated from the forms of an ignorant and scholastic logic ; and whilst we behold with satisfaction the Volume of Inspiration laid open to the discussion of a rational and learned, not visionary, criticism, from which we may indulge the hope of receiving a faithful interpretation of all its parts ; we are to hold in awful recollection, that it is *divine* in its origin and *mysterious* in its form, that, though the things which are therein “ revealed belong to us and to our children,” to investigate and to contemplate “ for ever, the secret things,” which are therein concealed, “ belong unto the Lord our God,” so to remain, till, in his wisdom, he open them more fully to our understanding. This consideration should be kept perpetually in mind ;

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left,

left, by exulting too much in the glorious liberty they have gained, critics and interpreters, commentators and translators, grow too bold in their literary career; and left, after snapping asunder the chains of prejudice and form, they rush into the opposite, and no less inglorious, extreme, of capricious judgment and fanciful invention.

From the General Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and the principles on which it is to be conducted, we shall descend with advantage to their PARTICULAR INTERPRETATION.

The former constitutes the office of the theological critic and *Commentator*; the latter that of the theological critic and *Translator*: which offices, however connected and allied, are so distinct in their proper exercise, that they should never be confounded. The view, however, which has been taken of the former, will lead us to the true principle of criticism and the just method of translating, according to which the latter should be conducted. The *divine Analogy* of scripture language which pervades the sacred volume,

and the frequent use of the *Paraboliſal ſtyle*, ſo important in its intention, will remind the *Translator* of the delicacy and difficulty of his undertaking. They will admoniſh him, that the taſk of preſenting the bible in a new language is peculiarly ſacred, to be executed with more caution and fidelity than that of tranſlating any other book.

One of the many bleſſings which providence hath beſtowed on this favoured country, in different periods of its hiſtory, is the *Engliſh Tranſlation of the Bible appointed to be read in Churches*, which for ſome ages it has enjoyed: and, whiſt gratitude compels us to put a high value upon a work by which our forefathers were inſtructed to ſerve their God, juſtice will oblige us to think and to ſpeak favourably of its intrinsic merit. They, to whoſe learning and labour we are indebted for this Tranſlation, were men ſeleſted for the taſk by the diſcernment of a pious and learned prince, endowed with every qualification of heart and underſtanding, and poſſeſſed of every advantage of learning and erudition for the execution of the work, that the ſtate of bibli-
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cal knowledge, and the religious complexion of the times, afforded. They availed themselves largely and judiciously of the learning and labours of former translators, both Latin and English: and it may be considered as an encomium adequate to the best efforts of human ability, if we say, that, upon the whole, they excelled all that went before them. Their language is plain, nervous, and dignified; and, whatever the defects of this translation may be in other respects, this in general will ever remain the object of our admiration and imitation.

After paying this tribute of praise, so justly due to our English Version, truth obliges us to own, that the translators, however able, laboured under unavoidable difficulties and disadvantages, by which they were at that time obstructed in the execution; but which are now removed: and if, from the present improved and improving state of biblical learning, the change of circumstances in favour of the present age, and the assistance of their excellent Translation, we presume that, as they improved upon their predecessors, they may be improved upon in their turn, the
M 4 presumption,

presumption, or at least the hope, will neither appear ungenerous towards them, nor unreasonable in itself.

The first step towards a good translation is to procure an accurate and perfect *Copy*. Without this, whatever other excellence the version may possess, it can be only a perfect representation of an imperfect original.

Such a *Copy* can only be obtained by a learned investigation, and critical examination, of the most authentic monuments and authorities of the sacred text, by an extensive collation of ancient manuscripts, and by the collateral elucidations of more ancient versions made from manuscripts more perfect than any that now exist.

The uncultivated state of biblical learning at the time, particularly grammatical, thwarted the success of our English translators; for want of which, they could not have recourse to such monuments and authorities in order to prepare a copy so corrected and improved. Too confidently prepossessed in the genuineness of the Masoretic text, corrupted by the ignorance and inaccuracy of transcribers, and disguised

guised by the punctuations and sinister practices of the more modern Jews devoted to rabbinical prejudices which it was made to countenance, they translated from false and imperfect originals^b: and, however exact and scrupulously faithful in rendering them word for word, by depending entirely upon them and neglecting more ancient and genuine authorities, their version must inevitably possess all their prejudices and defects. And by consulting modern lexicons too much, they misrepresented the meaning of many words.

After the true text is determined and restored, the next qualification of a scriptural translator is, on principles of just criticism and by a rational method of interpretation, to express the very sense of the author fairly and impartially. It is not, however, to be disguised, that, attachment to sect and the love of system inflamed by habits of disputation and polemical divinity, though more temperate in them than in their predecessors, laid an insensible bias on their free and impartial judgment.

^b See Lowth's Preface to his *Isaiah* and Kennicott's *Dissertations*.

To these radical and permanent causes of imperfection in the translators of the present version, another may be added, which is temporal and accidental. In the constant flux of the English, as of every living, tongue, some of their words have lost their meaning and are become obsolete; others have changed it, and are now antiquated; and, in many places, the grammatical construction is awkward, and, in some, confused.

From these causes, and others that might be assigned, particularly the want of uniformity, without any disrespect to the memory, or derogation from the acknowledged merit, of these very pious and learned men out of whose hands it came, we need not hesitate to pronounce, that, in our present Translation, mistakes and imperfections were unavoidable.

With this sense of these numerous defects, and convinced, as every one must be, of the universal importance of the sacred volume, and of the duty incumbent upon us to preserve the genuine meaning of every word which it contains; it would be almost as disgraceful to the improved learning and reformed religion of the present age, in which the re-
mains

mains of every classical author are brought forward in elegant versions, to suffer the bible to remain under these imperfections of translation, as it was to that of ignorance and superstition which prohibited its being translated at all,

Since the commencement of this century, biblical learning has begun to flourish in the universities of Europe: and it is, by being conducted on just and rational principles, and from the joint studies of the learned of different countries and communities joining hand in hand in promoting the great work, that the volume of scripture is to be restored to its purity and perfection. At length, the rage for system and hypothesis has entirely subsided. We rejoice to see the old discipline of the schools upon the wain: and we may congratulate the learned on turning their attention from useless words and forms to things of real importance, and on applying themselves, with the most benevolent and ingenuous views, to the genuine sources of theological truth, biblical studies, and Jewish antiquities.

Capellus,

Capellus, before this period, with a bold and daring hand, first ventured to remove the veil of superstition and credulity, which concealed the errors and deformities of the Jewish originals, and to emancipate the study of the scriptures from those Masoretic prepossessions and rabbinical prejudices, to which it had been so long confined. But, to shake off these chains, so disgraceful and injurious to sound Theology, and to clear the way to the genuine interpretation of holy writ, was a work reserved for Houbigant, who, though too bold in some of his conjectural emendations of the sacred text, from a copy corrected with great learning, grammatical skill, and critical acumen, presented the world with an excellent version of the Old Testament, as a model for the imitation of all future improvers of biblical learning. As a sacred critic and translator, Houbigant holds the foremost rank, and is, doubtless, intitled to the choicest laurel. He has had the honour to be followed by a Lowth and a Michaelis, who, after him, took the lead in this high walk of sacred criticism; whose labours, though sometimes perhaps imitating

imitating the conjectural determinations of their leader more than the principles of sacred criticism will bear them out, are judicious and well-conducted upon the whole, and are continued and improved by learned men of our own and other nations; by whose concurrent labours, since the charm was broken, many prejudices and obstacles are now removed, and the avenues to the inviolable sanctuary of religion have been gradually cleared.

Under the direction of such leaders, sacred learning hath gone on improving and to be improved. The first act consists of an extensive and critical *Collation* and comparison of manuscripts, parallel places, quotations, versions, and editions; in which laborious department of biblical learning the lucubrations of a Kennicot hold a distinguished rank. The second act, consequent upon the first, is a *New Translation* of the bible, or rather perhaps, an *emended Edition of the Old*. Some few of the learned, actuated more by an honest zeal for the Old Translation than directed in judgment by a knowledge of the true merits of the question, have strenuously opposed the
work,

work, as in itself unnecessary, as hazardous in its execution, and even dangerous in its effects: whilst others, directed by better information, have been and are at this time employed in the useful, but arduous, undertaking, with every advantage of ingenuity learning and impartiality on their side; flattering our most ardent hopes, and promising to gratify our most sanguine expectations*. They are not, however, exactly agreed in regard to the just and true *Method* of scriptural Translation, a subject of the last importance to the success of so great a work, and which should be previously determined: but, from the liberal friendly and unassuming spirit which they breathe towards each other; and which is so manly and generous in them all, as to win the approbation and assistance of every one who can contribute in the least to the promotion of so laudable an undertaking, we may cherish a pregnant hope, that one uniform, rational, and judicious plan will be settled, and invariably pursued.

* Bp. Newcome, Dr. Blaney, Dr. Goddes, Dr. Campbell, and others.

When

When the text of an original, whatever it may be, is once adjusted, that sound and accurate judgment, which understands the precise meaning of the words, distinguishes the idioms, and considers the genius, of the language from which, and of that into which, the version is to be made, forms the general qualification of a competent translator; without which, he is unable to give a just representation of any composition, profane or sacred. But the exact *Method*, and the proper *Rules*, by which the work is to be conducted, are to be formed on principles derived from the nature and genius of the originals themselves.

The theological axiom, therefore, which has been established in the preceding pages, That the holy Bible, in its origin and formation, is *different* from all books of human composition, however different they may be from each other, will require that different *Rules* shall be observed in its Translation as well as exposition. In support of this opinion I am happy to appeal to the judgment of Lord Bacon, whose authority in all subjects
of

of literature is justly acknowledged to be superior and decisive. The Scriptures being given by Inspiration, and not by human reason, do differ from all books in the Author; which, by consequence, doth draw on some difference to be used by the expositor.

How far human judgment is to be exercised in translating the word of God, is the great question, in the precise solution of which many different opinions always have divided, and still continue to divide, the learned; and, till it be decided upon a firm and philosophical ground, though our present translators may possess more biblical knowledge and enjoy more advantages, than their predecessors did, their labours will exhibit an unequal and imperfect representation of the sacred text.

As the bible has one thing common with all other books, that it is written in the human language, the chief cause of these different opinions, and most certainly the great cause of ill-success, is, that learned men, some more and some less, according to their

On the Advancement of Learning, b. ii.

personal

personal taste and private judgment, bring their rules and ideas of translating from classical books to the sacred volume. ‘ This manner of interpreting,’ says Lord Bacon, ‘ seems at first sight sober and chaste, yet notwithstanding it both dishonoureth Scripture, and is a great prejudice and detriment to the Church: and this is, to speak in a word, when divinely inspired Scriptures are expounded after the same manner that human writings are. For it must be remembered, that there are two points known to God the author of Scripture which man’s nature cannot comprehend, that is, the *Secrets of the heart* and the *Successions of times*, which do make a just and sound difference between the manner of exposition of the Scriptures and all other books. For it is an excellent observation which hath been made upon the answers of our Saviour Christ to many of the questions which were propounded to him, how that they are impertinent to the question demanded: the reason whereof is, because, not being like man, which knows man’s thoughts by his words, but knowing man’s thoughts immediately

VOL. II.

N

‘ mediately

178 *The Chart and Scale*

' mediately and of himself, he never an-
 ' swered their words, but their thoughts:
 ' and another reason is, that he spake not
 ' only to them that were then present, but
 ' to us also who now live, and to men of
 ' every age and place to whom the Gospel
 ' shall be preached; which sense in many
 ' places of scripture must take place. Much
 ' in like manner it is with the Scriptures,
 ' which, being written to the thoughts of
 ' men, and to the succession and vicissitude of all
 ' ages, with a certain foresight of all heresies,
 ' contradictions, differing and mutable estates
 ' of the Church, as well in general as of the
 ' Elect in special, are not to be interpreted
 ' only according to the latitude of the proper
 ' sense of the place and respectively towards
 ' that present occasion whereupon the words
 ' were uttered, or in precise congruity or
 ' contexture with the words before or after,
 ' or in contemplation of the principal scope
 ' of the place; but have in themselves not
 ' only totally and collectively, but distinc-
 ' tively in clauses and words, infinite springs
 ' and streams of doctrine to water the church
 ' in every part: and therefore as the *literal*
 ' is,

is, as it were, the main stream or river, to the moral sense chiefly, and sometimes the allegorical or typical are they whereof the Church hath most use. Not that I wish men to be bold in allegories, or indulgent or light in allusions: but that I do much condemn that interpretation of the scripture, which is only after the manner as men use to interpret a profane book.

These observations apply to particular, more than to general, interpretation; and if our translators would honour this instruction of the great luminary of all science with the attention it deserves, it would supply them with a general Principle philosophically grounded, from which certain Rules of translating would be easily deduced, by which they might uniformly and successfully conduct their labours: and surely, men who are as much distinguished for their ingenuity as for their learning, will not disdain to be directed in their interpretation of the volume of Grace, by a light which led a Newton through that

This extract is taken partly from his book *De Augm. Scient.* in Latin, lib. ix. and partly from his book *Of the Advancement of Learning*, b. ii.

of Nature to immortality. This principle will admonish them, that, in unfolding the oracles of God, by presenting them in a vernacular tongue, to the inhabitants of whole nations, they “tread on holy ground.” It will warn them “to put their shoes from off their feet,” and to advance with fear and caution; lest, by a mixture of human art, they injure or misrepresent the dictates of Him, who hath awfully declared, that, “heaven and earth shall pass away; but that his Word shall not pass away.”

As his office is to give a faithful picture of the original, one Rule of the first importance to the successful translator, though one of the most difficult to put effectually in practice, is, to divest himself of every kind of *Prejudice* or *bias*. *Prejudice* wears itself insensibly into the mind, and is there so confirmed by time and habit, that it is an enemy in our own bosom the most difficult to conquer; but prejudices in Religion imbibed with our maternal milk, and cherished not only with fondness, but with an eager and intemperate zeal, are

Matth. xxiv. 35. more

more obstinate and inveterate than any other. To avoid all partial and private interpretation, the bane of sound theology, he should banish from his mind all systems and hypotheses of human fabric; he should divest himself of those narrow habits of thinking, which he may have contracted in the use of a dogmatical and factitious logic; he should forget the very persuasion in which he was bred, however orthodox it may be; and he should be constantly and religiously upon his guard, lest the spirit of a sect should supersede that of a Christian, and lest he shew himself the disciple of men, rather than 'taught of God.'

Since

* In this fundamental Rule all our present Translators pronounce themselves to be agreed.

* The critical sense of Passages should be considered; and not the opinions of any denomination of Christians.—

* The translation should be philological, not controversial.*

Bp. Newcome's XIIth Rule. See Pref. to Translation of 12 Minor Prophets, p. 37.

* Unwedded to systems of any kind, literary, physical, or religious, a Translator of the Bible should sit down to render his Author with the same indifference he would sit down to render Thucydides or Xenophon. He should try to forget that he belongs to any particularly Society of Christians; be extremely jealous of his own rational

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* prepossessions;

Since human language hath been employed as the instrument of divine revelation, however analogically understood, we need not hesitate in concluding, that it is to be understood and construed according to the *Grammar* of the tongue in which the revelation was given, and to be translated according to that

‘ prepossessions; keep all theological consequences as far out of his sight as possible, and investigate the meaning of his original by the rules only of sound and sober criticism, regardless of pleasing or displeasing any party.’

Dr. Geddes’ Prospectus, p. 141, 142.

‘ Of such consequence it is to a Translator to banish all party-considerations, to forget, as far as possible, that he is connected with any party, and to be ever on his guard lest the Spirit of the sect absorb the spirit of the Christian, and he appear to be the follower of some human teacher, a Calvin, an Arminius, a Socinus, a Pelagius, an Arius, or an Athanasius, than of our only divine and rightful teacher Christ.’

Dr. Campbell’s Dissertations to his Translation of the Gospels, p. 518.

‘ A Translator is bound to abstract from, and, as far as possible, forget all sects and systems, together with the polemic jargon which they have been the occasion of introducing. His aim ought to be invariably to give the untainted sentiments of the author, and to express himself in such manner as men would do amongst whom such disputes had never been agitated.’ Ibid. p. 510.

of

of the other into which the version is to be made.

So far the Laws of Translation, both sacred and profane, perfectly coincide; in other respects they materially differ, according to the different nature of the works on which the translator is employed; and first, in point of *Propriety*.

I. Presuming that human judgment is at all times commensurate to a human composition, the translator, if fitly qualified for his office, sits down to the task of rendering it in another language on terms of familiarity, and almost equality, with his author. That the new dress which he is making may fit with ease, and appear with the elegance to which he is intitled; that it may lose the stiffness which the peculiarities of the original language would entail upon it, he gives both the *Words* and *Sentences* such an idiomatical change, as will enable him to cast the sense freely in the mould of the translation, and to give it an air of originality. In short he takes the thoughts of the author, and presents them in his own expression.

184 *The Chart and Scale*

So far from presuming that his judgment is equally commensurate to a divine production, the judicious Translator of the Holy Scriptures will sit down to the work impressed with a sense of this awful truth, That "the thoughts of God are not as man's thoughts, nor his ways, or words, as those of men;" that the matter of Revelation is more the object of his Faith than of his Understanding; and that the manner is sacred and frequently concealed. He will not therefore find himself upon the same terms of ease and familiarity with his author, nor represent his *Words* and *Sentences* with that freedom of change, which his own judgment might direct, his fancy suggest, or which he might think the genius and elegance of his language would require; conscious that, as they stand in the original, they might be intended to convey a meaning, which, by such change, might be lost or injured. He will, therefore, endeavour, first, to find the true *literal*, and *grammatical* sense, and then content himself by making choice of such *Words* and *Sentences* as will, in the new language, most fully and *literally* express it. In the propriety of this rule our translators

tors seem agreedⁿ; though, from the difference of judgment in its execution, they vary in the practice of it.

As
The first and principal business of a Translator is to give the plain and grammatical sense of his Author, the obvious meaning of his words, phrases, and sentences; and to express them in the language into which he translates, as far as may be, in equivalent words, phrases, and sentences. Whatever indulgence may be allowed him in other respects, however excusable he may be, if he fails in attaining the elegance, the spirit, the sublimity of his author, (which will generally be in some degree the case, if his author excels at all in these qualities,) want of fidelity admits of no excuse, and is entitled to no indulgence. This is peculiarly so in subjects of high importance, such as the Holy Scriptures, in which so much depends on the phrase and expression; and particularly in the prophetic books of scripture, where from the letter are often deduced deep and recondite senses, which must owe all their weight and solidity to the just and accurate interpretation of the words of the prophecy. For whatever senses are supposed to be included in the Prophet's words, Spiritual, Mystical, Allegorical, Analogical, or the like, they must all entirely depend on the literal sense. This is the only foundation upon which such interpretations can be securely raised; and if this is not firmly and securely established, all that is built upon it will fall to the ground. Bp. Lowth's Preliminary Dissertation to Isaiah, p. lii.

Bishop

As there are no two languages which have a perfect synonymity and coincidence of words, the observance of this Rule will often become a task of the greatest difficulty, to cope with which, the Translator should possess a very extensive knowledge of both languages; he should discriminate with the nicest distinction, and choose with the maturest deliberation. According to the direction of Houbigant, *Non fieri potest, ut duarum linguarum paria verba semper puribus respondeant; verba sunt ponderanda non numeranda*¹. Even words which correspond etymologically, do not always correspond virtually; so that,

Bishop Newcome's 1st Rule is, 'The translator should express every word of the original by a literal rendering, where the English idiom admits of it, and where not only purity, but perspicuity and dignity of expression can be preserved.' See Preface to Tr. of 12 M. P. p. xvii.

'First of all a Translator of the Bible ought to be faithful; that is, ought to express all the meaning, and no more than the meaning, of the original.' Geddes' Prospectus, p. 126.

'The first thing a Translator has to do is to give a just and clear representation of the sense of the original, which is the most essential of all.' Campbell, Dissertation x. part 1.

¹ Prolegomena, cap. v. art. 3.

4 how much

howmuchsoever a Translation of the Bible that is *strictly literal* might be desired, from these differences in all languages, it is impossible that a good one should ever be obtained²; and it is well known that they who have been the most scrupulously attached to the latter, are, on account of these differences, often the farthest from the literal and grammatical sense, the first object of all scriptural translation¹.

This difficulty has beset all biblical translators, and divided them in their judgment of the just nature and limits of their office. Some, and these very learned men, upon considering this difference inherent in the texture and formation of languages, and observing, that they, who adhered the closest to the latter, were the farthest from the sense, have given up the difficulty attending a literal translation as insurmountable, and taken refuge in a more loose and distant mode of rendering. The idea of a literal translation of

² 'It is absolutely impossible to translate literally from any language whatever without being often barbarous, obscure, and equivocal.' Dr. Geddes' Prospectus, p. 127.

¹ Pagninus and Montanus are less faithful guides than even Castalio, Michaelis, or Wynn.

scripture

188 *The Chart and Scale*

scripture should not, however, be abandoned. Though words cannot be made to correspond to words, either as to their number, synonymy, or etymology; yet there is a middle-way, though sometimes difficult to be found, by which they may be made to correspond in equipollence and effect; so that the translation, though not *strictly*, will be *virtually literal*. Such a Translation the Principle, which considers the Bible as a divine production, not only countenances, but requires: and, however others may indulge their genius in taking greater liberty with the words of Inspiration, PROPRIETY will support us in subscribing to the opinion of Beza, as far as the difference of the languages will admit, *Quo propius abest a Græcis & Hebræis Latina Interpretatio, eo mihi magis probanda videatur*^m.

The *Idioms* of languages differ more than the Words, and the translator of a prophetic

^m Beza, Nov. Test. Dedicat.

‘Where a verbal translation cannot be interwoven, one equivalent to it should be substituted, and the idiom [or the word] in the text should be literally rendered in the margin.’

Bp. Newcome, III. Rule, p. 23.

author

author would not be read or tolerated, who does not invariably make the change, and adopt that of his own language. But, in translating the sacred volume, the same Principle, for the same important reasons, will prescribe to the translator a different Rule of conduct. To retain all the smaller peculiarities in an English translation, would, I know, be unnecessary, and, indeed, absurd: fortunately, however, for the exact coincidence of idiom and phrase with the original, in all matters of more essential importance, there is a singular coincidence and similarity between the Hebrew and English tonguesⁿ: Many Hebrewisms of greater consequence have long appeared in an English dress in former translations, and are at length so fami-

ⁿ ' Our Language easily moulds itself into the Hebrew form; and it rarely happens that we are under any necessity of having recourse to paraphrase and circumlocution to express the full meaning of the text. Even when the syntactical arrangement is different, there is a striking equipollence of simplicity, conciseness, and energy, to be attained; which, perhaps, no modern language can boast of; and which is not found in ours with regard to any other language but the Hebrew.'

Dr. Geddes' Prospectus, Note, p. 128.

liar

liar to the ear by the frequency of repetition, that it would now feel itself strange and even offended without them. They possess also that dignity which antiquity confers upon every thing with which it is connected; they have a warmth and animation unknown to modern languages, and raise the English above its natural level, qualifying it to become the vehicle of religious truths.

‘ There is a certain coldness,’ says the judicious Addison, ‘ in the phrases of our European languages, when compared with the oriental forms of speech; and it happens very luckily that the Hebrew idiom runs into the English tongue with a peculiar grace and beauty. Our language has received innumerable elegances and improvements from that infusion of Hebrewisms, which are derived to it out of the poetical passages in holy writ; they give force and energy to our expression, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases, than any that are to be met with in our own tongue. There is something so pathetic in this kind of diction, that it often sets the mind

mind in a flame, and makes our hearts burn within us. If any one should judge of the beauties of poetry which are to be met with in the divine writings, and examine how kindly the Hebrew manners of speech mix and incorporate with the English language; after having perused the book of Psalms, let him read a literal translation of Horace and Pindar, and he will find in these two last such an absurdity and confusion of style, with such a comparative poverty of imagination, as will make him very sensible of what I have been here advancing.

Castalio, both in biblical learning and critical judgment, was a superior translator: but, by an unhappy attempt to leave the Hebrew idiom behind and to clothe his version in all the elegance of the Latin phraseology and construction, upon the principle of profane translation injudiciously applied, he has not only abandoned the fidelity, as well as others, but he has lost all the dignity and simplicity of holy scripture. Instead of being all that is elegant, and graceful, and ornamental, as he expected; every thing is finical and affected in this fancy-dress: and all the re-

• Spectator.

dundance

dundance of his polish submits, not only to the simplicity of his rival Beza, but often to the more servile representations of Tremellius and Junius, and even those of Montanus and Pagninus.

For these, among other reasons, a critical revision and improved Edition of the Old, is more desirable than a New, Translation: for, not only the Hebrew *Idiom*, but as many of the *Words* as possible of the old translation should be retained, on account of their simplicity and dignity, and also, to indulge the honest prejudice of the people^p: for the re-

‘ When the Terms and Phrases employed by former Interpreters are well adapted for conveying the sense of the author,—they are justly preferred to other words equally expressive and proper; but which, not having been used by former Interpreters, are not current in that application.’ Campbell’s Diff. XI. p. 521.

‘ Words that are too *fine*, too *learned*, or too *scholarly*, are repugnant to the style of the sacred penmen, are too flowery, too affected, and too modish, to suit their style, which is eminently *natural*, *simple*, and *dignified*. And, on the other hand, words that are *low* and *vulgar*, are still more derogatory from the exalted *sublimity* of the subject and language of holy Scripture.’ Ibid. Diff. XI. p. 570.

‘ The simple and ancient turn of the present Version should be retained.’ Bp. Newcome’s VIth Rule, p. xxxii.

mark,

mark, from whatever quarter it may have come, is very justly made, 'that common minds can with difficulty discriminate between the language and the substance; and in losing the one they will be in no little anxiety about the other: besides that the long use of writings avowedly sacred gives a venerable air to the language, and seems almost to consecrate it to the service of religion.'

But, to crown this general reasoning in support of the preservation of the ancient idiom, we have two precedents whose authority will be allowed to be unquestionable. The Septuagint is a translation of the Old Testament, of very high, if not of divine, authority: in which, though the language be Greek, the idiom is uniformly Hebrew: and in the New Testament itself, though the words are Greek, the ideas are Jewish, and the idiom Hebrew; which afford a convincing proof that the original idiom is, at any rate, to be preserved.

In regard to the particular *Spirit, Style, Character, and Manner*, of each sacred writer, the

Critical Review, Nov. 1789.

VOL. II.

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transfusion

transfusion of which into their new language constitutes, in the idea of our modern translators, the main difficulty, and the chief merit, of their art : they are things much more

‘ “ It is incumbent on every Translator to study the *Manner* of his author ; to mark the peculiarities of his *Style* ; to *imitate* his *features*, his *air*, his *gesture*, and, as far a different language will permit, even his *voice* ; in order to give a just and expressive resemblance of the original.’ Lowth. Prelim. Dissert. to Isaiah xxxv.

‘ The second thing a translator is to do, is, to convey into his version as much as possible, in consistency with the genius of the language which he writes, the author’s *spirit* and *manner*, and, if I may so express myself, the very character of his *style*.’ Campbell’s Dissert. X. part 1.

‘ The fifth quality of a good translation is that diversity of *style* which characterized the different scripture writers, which, however difficult to attain, ought certainly, by all means, to be aimed at.—Every writer, whether sacred or profane, has something peculiar to himself, and it ought to be the endeavour of a translator to retain as much as possible of that peculiarity.’ Geddes’ Prospectus, p. 137, 138. This learned author then quotes the above words of Bp. Lowth, as authority, which, I hope, he does not embrace without considering what precedes and follows them.

‘ To convey into his Version as much of his Author’s *Spirit* and *Manner* as the genius of the language which he writes will admit,’ is the second qualification of a scripture Translator mentioned by Dr. Campbell, and Mr. Wakefield

more arbitrary and uncertain than either words or idioms, varying more in different authors, than these do in different languages; and to transfuse them in translating is an act of imitation which is fanciful and capricious, depending on the taste and genius, more than the sound judgment, of the translator, without so much as a limit to restrain the imagination. This favourite Rule is obviously taken from profane translation, without sufficiently attending to the different nature of inspired productions; and is too vague and licentious for the severe principle of scriptural translation to admit. Translators should reflect, that by labouring to observe this rule, they are in the act of infringing the preceding, to which they are more strictly bound, and of defeating their own design.

To give his production all the beauties and advantages of the original, the translator of a human work, especially if it be poetical, sees that, in this imitation, lies his fullest and fairest scope, and that his success will depend on his poetical genius. In the execution, he not only Wakefield is of opinion, that a considerable share of *human Ingenuity* and *Invention* is requisite in order to preserve this *Spirit* and *Manner*. See his Preface.

leaves many of the words and idioms of his author, but his figures too, and flies to the recourses of his own fancy to supply him with such others, as, whilst they in a good measure convey the thought, suit the nature and elegance of his own language, and rise of themselves to that proportion of spirit and animation, and to that particular style and character, which he conceives his author to possess. And if, to heighten and improve these qualities, he sometimes give a new turn to the thought, the licence has been commended; as, by making the author shine in the translation with a higher lustre than his own, it makes amends for some of the many particulars in which every translator must fall short of his original. And, however different it may be in many particular instances, if the translation produce the general effect of the author, the translator has arrived at the summit of his art, to which, though all hope and imagine they have attained, their success is in proportion to their genius, and their imitations as various as their taste.

Such imitation of the *style, character, and manner*, of the sacred writers, whose language
is

is always analogical, and often more highly poetical than the classic authors, is an effort of human genius, of which, I humbly conceive, the nature of the originals, and the severe laws of translation which they dictate, cannot, in any degree, allow. This would be to mix too much of what is vague and human with what is unchangeable and divine; and is, indeed, subversive of that literal and idiomatical fidelity for which we have been contending.

The late learned and ingenious prelate to whom biblical learning is so much indebted, who brought too much classical refinement to the criticism of sacred poetry, introduced this imitative translation also from classical authors to the sacred volume; under the persuasion that it is perfectly compatible with a strictly literal version. Here the same questions recur in regard to translating, which were proposed in regard to criticizing, inspired productions. How far is this imitation to be carried? and who shall draw the line where it is to stop? He has ably observed, that in translating the works of the best classic poets, much depends not only in giving the sense of

the author with equal force and elegance, but in taking off his characteristic feature, his complexion, his personal mien, and very motion. And he owns that whoever has thus attempted to translate the sacred poets into Greek or Latin verse, if not quite inferior, they must necessarily be *diffimilar*, to them¹. And notwithstanding this concession, he has himself attempted to reconcile this characteristic imitation with his English version. He declares the design of his translation of Isaiah to be ‘ not only to give an exact and faithful
 ‘ representation of the words and of the sense
 ‘ of the prophet, by adhering as closely to
 ‘ the letter of the text, and treading as nearly
 ‘ as may be in his footsteps; but, moreover,
 ‘ to imitate the *air* and *manner* of the author,
 ‘ to express the *form* and *fashion* of his com-

¹ In exprimendis alia lingua egregiorum poetarum operibus, multum in eo positum est, ut non tantum iidem sint intimi sensus, par in sensibus explicandis vis & venustas, sed ut quantum fieri potest externa etiam oris lineamenta effingantur, ut suus cuique color atque habitus, suus etiam motus & incessus tribuatur. Qui itaque sacros Vates Græco vel Latino carmine exprimere adeoque eorum veluti personam sustinere conati sunt, fieri non potuit quin toto genere & forma, si non inferiores, multum certe ab iis dissimiles essent. Præl. iii.

‘ position,

‘ position, and to give the English reader
‘ some notion of the peculiar *turn* and *cast*
‘ of the original.’ The latter part of this
design coincides, he thinks, perfectly with
the former: and, whatever his success may
have been in the execution, his ingenuity de-
serves to be commended, however it may be
with his conscience. His example, however,
rendered the more attractive by the celebrity
of his learning, the brilliancy of his genius,
the dignity of his station, and the fascinating
elegances of his Latin style, others, possessed
of less judicious caution, may have been too
eager to follow, without keeping within the
bounds of imitation which he prescribed”,

‘ Preliminary Dissertation to his Isaiah, p. 1.

“ His idea of imitation seems to have gone no farther than
to an attempt to represent the prophet’s *manner*, the *form* of
his composition, and his *character* as a writer, so far as re-
lates to their *verse*, *measure*, and *rhythm*; without affecting
the *style* properly understood, the *idioms*, *metaphors*, *images*,
and *expressions* of the sacred writers. And this imitation is,
perhaps, founded in caprice and fancy rather than in fixed and
certain principles. He hoped, however, that it was per-
fectly consistent with the literal sense. ‘ I must entreat the
‘ reader to be satisfied with my endeavour to express the
‘ literal sense—this is what I have endeavoured closely and
‘ exactly to express.’ Ibid. p. 74.

relying too confidently on this false presumption, that, though the matter was furnished by the inspirer, yet the *form* and *manner* of uttering it was left entirely to the natural genius and inclination of the inspired; agreeably to the words of Castalio, *Res dictat Spiritus, verba quidem & linguam loquenti aut scribenti liberam permittit*.*

That inspiration consists in the communication of ideas, and not in words, which are only the instrument and mode of that communication, is an opinion confidently maintained by many of the learned; with all deference to which, I would contend, that the inspirer was interested in the *manner* as well as in the *matter*, in the *words* as well as in the *ideas*.

In his supernatural intercourse with men, the Almighty has recourse to human instruments. It was shewn, in the preceding pages, that he condescended to employ human words to be *analogically* understood, in order to convey his divine truths to their understanding. But, because the instruments are human, no one will presume to take the liberty of giving

* Def. contra Bezam.

them

them any change or different representation by any effort of human genius. No one will presume to change the words *Father, Son, Redeemer, Mediator*, which the inspirer hath adopted. It was also shewn, that, for special purposes or revelation, he made use of that *parabolical* expression, those *poetical symbols* and *figures*, which abound in the eastern languages: and why are not they as sacred as those analogical words*?

Upon this ground of reasoning, we may justly attribute their different *styles*, their appropriate *spirit* and *character* to the natural genius, or to the particular education, of the prophets: at the same time, that, as the Spirit of prophecy employed their language, whatever it might be, with all its images and figures, to his own purposes, it became his instrument, as well as the prophets were themselves, and was, in that view, properly his own*.

But,

* Metaphors are in general to be retained, and the substitution or unnecessary introduction of new ones should be avoided. And, if the original metaphor cannot be transferred, it should be rendered in the margin.

Bp. Newcome's VIth Rule; ααααα

* Utrumque [το περι τας νοσεις ἀδρεωβολου et το σφοδρον και ενθουσιασικον παθος] in hoc argumento usurpamus,

But, who can affirm that his divine afflatus had no concern in the immediate act of animating and forming these several styles? or who shall draw the line and determine precisely how far he was concerned? Whether he addressed the world by Amos in the style of a shepherd, by Daniel in that of a courtier, or by David in that of a King; whether he spoke in *figures*, in *symbols*, or by *double senses*, he would mould their minds, and why not their *words*, their *styles*, and even *actions*, to his heavenly purpose. And, since under the cover of these styles and symbols he generally concealed the main burden of prophetic enunciation from the prophets themselves, his influence may be considered as more immediate over these, than over their

pamus, atque ita Sacris Vatribus tribuimus, ut nihil derogemur Divini Spiritus afflatui: etsi suam interea vim propriæ cujusquam scriptoris naturæ atque ingenio concedamus. Lowth, Præl. xvi.

⁊ Hanc speciem *εὐθεσιασμοῦ* appellarem Naturalem, nisi viderer plane inter se repugnantia conjungere: est certe longe diversus, & altioris quidem originis, verus ille & germanus *εὐθεσιασμος*, eoque nomine unice dignus, quo solummodo Hebræorum Poesis sublimior, ac maxime Prophetica, incitatur. Ibid. Præl. xvii.

minds

minds—"Go thy way, Daniel; for the words
"are closed up and sealed to the time of
"the end?"

When the Prophetic style conveys a *double sense*, a literal and a figurative, the words are the vehicle of the literal to him who understands the language only, and the literal sense is the vehicle of the figurative to him to whom it may be given to 'discern the things of the spirit;' but, if the translator, upon the idea of imitating what he imagines to be the style and spirit of the prophet, in order to transfuse them into his version according as his taste and genius may direct, make the least change in the images or even in the words, in vain will the interpreter seek for the figurative meaning. And, however the prophetic sense be couched, whether under *metaphors*, *symbols*, or other cover, similar consequences will result from similar changes.

'That the difference of style in the writers, who were alike the organs of inspiration, is no objection to their having been inspired,' is, therefore, a position to which I readily concede. The Almighty can employ the or-

* Daniel xii. 9.

gans

gans of free agents as the instruments of his revelation, without making in them any sensible change. The sacred writers might be permitted to use the style most congenial to their taste and education, whilst the inspirer was bending it, by his secret operation, to his prophetic purposes, and even privately suggesting such words and phrases, such figures and images, as were adapted to his end: which secret and supernatural operation upon the mind of man is the peculiar prerogative of the Holy Spirit, both in his extraordinary and ordinary communications. “The wind
 “bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest
 “the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence
 “it cometh or whither it goeth: even so is
 “every one that is born of the Spirit.”

If, therefore, *things* were the first object of inspiration, *words* and *forms of words* were the second; and the favourite position, upon the strength of which critics and translators make as free with Moses, David, and Isaiah, as they do with Homer, Sophocles, or Virgil, That, whatever the *matter* may be, the *words* and *manner* are, in both cases, equally their

* John iii. 8.

their

their own, has no foundation, but in a weak and narrow-minded vanity, by which they hope to entertain the learned, and to astonish the ignorant, with a display of their ingenuity and self-invention.

How, then, it may be required, are the *Spirit*, and *Manner*, and *characteristic Style*, of the sacred writers, those prominent and distinctive qualities, to be preserved and represented in an English translation? I answer: sufficiently by rendering them as *verbally* and *idiomatically* as possible, without attempting any ingenious imitation at all; in which opinion I have the concurrence of one of the most sober and judicious of our translators, who observes, that, ‘ by a literal rendering ‘ not only the matter of the scriptures, but ‘ the peculiar turn of the language, will be ‘ faithfully represented ’:’ and, I think, with a better and more distinctive effect, than by the most successful attempts of the translator, which, in spite of his utmost endeavour to vary with the variety of each author, must retain throughout the whole a characteristic similarity

‘ Bp. Newcome’s Præf. to 12 Minor Prophets, p. xvii.

of his own. The English tongue, having been in the long habit of expressing Hebrew ideas in Hebrew phrases, is, by use as well as nature, adapted for this effect. Without labouring to mimic the Jewish character and expression, it can put them on at once, and, however various they may be, they will not only fit with ease, but appear with elegance. That all poetry is confined to metre is an idea as false, as it is contracted: and, whether the original be in verse or not, the translation, though in prose, will retain the poetic style and spirit, which is the main object, and enough of the measure, whatever it might be, to preserve the native dignity of the original. This is acknowledged by the late ingenious prelate*, who took the lead in imitative translation,

* Duo hic occurrunt adnotanda, quæ ex jam dictis quasi confectaria quædam enascuntur. Primo quidem, Poema ex Hebræa in aliam linguam conversum, & oratione soluta ad verbum expressum, cum sententiarum formæ ædem permaneant, multum adhuc, etiam quod ad numeros attinet, pristinæ dignitatis retinebit, & adumbratam quandam carminis imaginem. Hoc, itaque in vernacula sacrorum poematum interpretatione cernitur, ubi plerumque

“Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ:”

quod in Græcis aut Latinis versibus eodem modo conversis, longe aliter eveniret.

and

and who, after labouring, in a preliminary apology, with his utmost ingenuity and address, to ascertain the measure, structure, style, and character, of the Hebrew writers, in order to imitate them, felt at last the difficulties and inconsistencies in which he was entangled, and ingenuously confessed, that the subject was *opiniative* in the foundation, and *precarious* in the event ^d.

By the rules of PROPRIETY, therefore, resulting from the principle of scriptural Translation founded on the nature of the sacred volume, an English version of the bible should be as *verbal* and *idiomatical* and exactly *representative* of the original, as the language into which it is made will possibly admit.

I. From the Rules of Propriety let us proceed, on the same scriptural principle, to those of PERSPICUITY, that other tribunal at which translators are to be judged.

^d 'I venture to submit to the judgment of the candid reader the preceding observations upon a subject which hardly admits of proof or certainty, which is rather a matter of *opinion* and *taste*, than of science.' Diss. Prelim. xxxiii.

Perfpicuity is a quality of firft importance in all human compofition, and fo effential to its perfection, that, whenever the author is obfcure, the tranflator makes no fcruple to ftep out of his province to give him light at all adventures, even if he have recourfe to conjecture; the too hafty and licentious ufe of which, in criticizing and tranflating claffic authors, has, however, been feverely and juftly cenfured. On the contrary, it has been obferved, that, in dictating the holy fcriptures, obfcurity and concealment were often in the intention of the infpirer: which different intention will require a different conduct in the tranflator. In fcriptural tranflation, therefore, Perfpicuity fhould ever give place to Propriety; and we fhould take care, left, in the purfuit of the fecondary and inferior rule, we fhould lofe fight of the primary and fuperior. As he treads on ground which is every where facred, and often involved in myftery, the tranflator fhould religiously confine himfelf to the literal and grammatical fenfe of the words. After the text is brought to all the perfection of which it is capable, when that fenfe is
given,

given, if the meaning of the inspired writer remain obscure, or even apparently absurd, the severity of the rule, which Propriety enjoins, will require, that it be left so under a literal and grammatical translation. Even Castalio, though a very free translator, felt the force, and acknowledged the justice, of this observation. *Hunc locum non intelligo, ideoque ad verbum transtuli.*

Upon this principle of scriptural translation the determination of Le Clerc is warrantable. *Translatio, ubi archetypus sermo clarus est, clara; ubi obscurus, obscura esse debet.* And that of Houbigant, who, taking his ideas from profane translation, attempts to turn it to ridicule, is inadmissible. *Obscurus est non semel Horatius; num igitur laudanda ea erit Horatii Gallica interpretatio, ubi clarus clare, ubi obscurus obscure loquentem reddit.* And, in a sort of triumph over Le Clerc, he proceeds, *Dubitandum non esset quæ sacri scriptores scripserunt, perspicue scripsisse.* Understood with this restriction, That what they were given clearly to understand themselves, and intended that their readers should clearly and immediately understand, they delivered clearly, or,

• Prolegom. in Pent. Dissert. ii. § 4.

VOL. II.

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That grammatically they were sufficiently clear, the observation may be just : but, taken at large, and extended to every sort of perspicuity, it is indeed fallacious ; and, from his high reputation as a biblical critic and translator, his authority hath misled, and is in danger of misleading, others^f.

A sensible translator has observed, on the contrary, that ‘ the Holy Spirit of God often
‘ intends

‘ ‘ Perspicuity is the second most essential quality of a
‘ good translator ; nor need we the authority of Horace or
‘ Aristotle to establish a proposition so agreeable to com-
‘ mon sense.’ Of Scriptural translation unfortunately nei-
‘ ther Horace nor Aristotle could be *judges*. ‘ The Jewish,
‘ like all other writers, certainly wrote to be understood.’
These Jewish writers were, in this important respect, totally
unlike all other writers. ‘ The poets and prophets them-
‘ selves are not obscure on account of their style, which,
‘ though bold and figurative, must have been perfectly in-
‘ telligible when they wrote.’ How far perfectly intelli-
gible ? Was it not by that bold and figurative style, that,
in their prophetic, the most important, sense, they were
often *unintelligible* ? ‘ A Translator, therefore, who, under
‘ pretext that his originals are obscure, affects to give an
‘ obscure translation, betrays either his idleness or ignorance,
‘ offers an insult to his readers, and throws an oblique
‘ ridicule on the author he pretends to interpret. If the
‘ scriptures are at all to be translated, of which we have no
‘ doubt, they should be made as plain and perspicuous as
‘ possible, and not a single ambiguity should be left in them
‘ to mislead, or to give occasion for dispute, or to give rise to
‘ controversy.’

' intends a mystery, and so leaves the letter
 ' seemingly obscure: such seeming absurdities
 ' are left for the honour of God's Spirit,
 ' which clears the difficulty, and sets all
 ' right.' Time is that only interpreter which
 can bring a light in the prophetic event to
 vindicate this honour by dispelling all such
intended obscurity, and which is not *incidental*
 to the letter. Critics and translators should,
 as far as possible, distinguish between these different
 kinds of obscurity; to the want of which distinction,
 I am persuaded, we may attribute the different
 opinions by which they are divided. The latter it is
 incumbent upon the sacred critic and translator to
 make clear by all possible means: with the former
 he has no manner of concern, but to take and leave it,
 under a literal version, as he finds it. Even, though
 to

' that can any ways be removed. That there are certain
 ' mysterious words of the originals that should not be rendered,
 ' may be a pious, but is not a rational, notion,'
 [Dr. Geddes' Prospectus, p. 128, 129.] Without making
 the just distinction between *grammatical* or *idiomatical*
 and *prophetic* obscurities, does not this very learned and
 liberal translator sacrifice *Propriety* to *Perspicuity*, the first
 law of Scriptural translation to the second?

' Dr. Gell.

' There are some things that our Saviour said as well
 ' as did to his disciples, which it was not intended they
 ' should

to us in these distant ages mysteries may be disclosed, which, when the scriptures were written, were hid in the womb of time, a translator, whose office is to give a representation, not an explanation, of his original, (in which consists the difference between a translator and commentator,) should not avail himself of this light. He should preserve the cover under which the prophetic meaning was concealed, though that meaning may now be clearly understood¹: and, much more, should he

‘ should understand then ; but which they would understand afterwards. *These things*, said our Lord, *I have spoken to you in figures ; the time cometh, when I shall no longer speak to you in figures, but instruct you plainly concerning the Father.* It was, therefore, not intended that every thing in the Gospel should be announced at first with plainness. It is withal certain that the veil of figurative language thrown over some things was employed to shade them only for a time, and, in the end, to conduce to their evidence and greater lustre. *For there was no secret that was not to be discovered, nor was ought concealed, that was not to be divulged.* Now justice is not done to the wise conduct of the Spirit, unless things be represented, as nearly as possible, in his own manner.’ Campbell’s *Dissertation*, p. 625.

‘ Though many of the events foretold which are now accomplished, have put the meaning of such prophecies beyond all question, we ought not, in translating them, to
‘ add

he keep inviolable the veil, under which secrets may yet remain concealed. All that he should attempt or hope, is, to render the bible so, as to be now literally understood as it was when originally written; to make it, if possible, as intelligible to the learned reader of the present age, as the writings of Moses were to the Israelites, and those of the Apostles to the ancient Jews^k: and it is the duty of the divine, (and a most weighty part of his ministerial function,) to make that translation intelligible by the vulgar.

This is that exact and faithful representation which the dictates of inspiration require, guarded as they are by a solemn prohibition that a word shall be added, diminished, or disguised. Though, from their

‘ add any light borrowed merely from the accomplishment.
 ‘ By so doing, we may materially injure the history, and
 ‘ render those mistakes incredible, which, on a more exact
 ‘ representation of things as they must have appeared at the
 ‘ time, were entirely natural.’ Campbell’s Dissertation,
 p. 625.

‘ ‘ It is the duty of a translator to give every thing to his
 ‘ readers as much as possible with the same advantages, nei-
 ‘ ther more nor less, with which the sacred author gave it to
 ‘ his contemporaries. Ibid.

greater familiarity with words, idioms, and customs, the contemporaries of a revelation may be supposed to have understood the literal meaning better than we do; we enjoy more of the spiritual than they: and, if with these advantages over us, they were suffered to remain under a thicker cloud of darkness, why should we either wonder or repine; that a part of that cloud should be still left to hang over our heads? or why endeavour, by a fruitless ingenuity, to remove it? When he has reason to suppose that from his eye time has removed the veil, let the translator adhere to his literal duty; and, as a commentator, he may give the full meaning in the notes: And, where the mystery remains involved in futurity, let him observe the rule of Castalio, an exact though finical translator, by rendering the words literally, and acknowledging his ignorance of their true meaning in the margin.

In attempting to carry Perspicuity, by the ingenuity of conjecture or by any other means, beyond the just limits which Propriety prescribes, let the translator of sacred writ awfully reflect, that he, who walks on common earth, is not only stepping out of his province

province into the shoes of an inspired writer, who trod on holy ground, but even over his head into the person of the inspirer in heaven, who frequently thought proper to hide his meaning from those who gave utterance to his words¹: and, because holy scripture is often obscure in the delivery, let him not too hastily imagine that it is therefore imperfect, and stands in need of his emendation and improvement^m.

III. But

¹ When Caiphas determined in council in regard to Jesus, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not, the evangelist informs us that this he spake not of himself, but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; which he neither intended nor understood himself.

^m See Lowth's Prelim. Differt. to Isaiah, p. 64.

‘ I am fully persuaded that the words, as they stand in the present Hebrew text, are utterly unintelligible. There is no doubt of the meaning of them separately; but put together, they make no sense at all—In this difficulty what can be done, but to have recourse to conjecture? This, it may be said, is imposing your sense upon the prophet; but, however, it is better than to impose upon him what makes no sense at all.’

Lowth's Notes on Isaiah, p. 271, 272.

When the text, if wrong, cannot be made right by collation, nothing should, I think, be done but to render the words as they stand verbatim.

III. But, though by the cover of a figurative and parabolical style, in all its forms, the Holy Spirit threw a temporary veil over the whole prophetic dispensation, he prepared the

This reasoning from the Principle laid down, may, perhaps, militate in some respects against the 15th rule proposed by a very learned prelate in his preface to his translation of the 12 Minor Prophets, whose sober and judicious conduct as a scriptural translator, meets my ideas upon the whole more than that of any other. ‘Of dark passages which exhibit no meaning as they stand in our present version, an intelligible rendering should be made on the principle of sound criticism.’ He then quotes the authority of Dr. Lowth, ‘that it is better to impose your own sense upon the prophet, than to impose upon him what makes no sense at all.’ As the authority and example of Houbigant misled this author, we cannot wonder that his should mislead others.

‘I cannot help disapproving,’ says our northern translator, ‘the admission of any correction merely on conjecture; for were such a method of correcting to be generally adopted, no bound could be set to the freedom which would be used with sacred writ—This is an extreme, which, should it prevail, would be much more pernicious than the other extreme of adhering implicitly, with or without reason, to whatever we find in the common edition.’ [Campbell’s Dissertation, p. 646.] What he so well observes of *correcting*, will apply with equal force to *translating*, by conjecture.

way

way to its removal, in his own proper time, by preserving an uniformity of language as the immediate key to unlock the sacred oracles, when the prophetic events took place. In addition, therefore, to the rules of Propriety and Perspicuity, that of UNIFORMITY should be sacredly regarded in all scriptural translation.

Notwithstanding the many different styles of scripture so much contended for by the modern critics, this Uniformity is interwoven through every part of the sacred volume, which, though written at very different times, and by very different pens, retains every where the same or similar *figures* and *symbols*, and often the same *words*. Possessed only of the Spirit “by measure,” the ancient prophets were unacquainted with the whole of that vast dispensation, of which they were the partial instruments, and which was conducted under the universal eye of that omniscient Mind, to which “a thousand years are as one day.” What one foretold partially and darkly, another, at a different period, more fully and clearly signified, in the same style and almost the same words, but
with

with more pointed and particular circumstances : by which consistency light was reflected from prophecy to prophecy, and the whole system was made to be illustrative of itself. If the Spirit of prophecy held in contemplation an uniform and consistent series of events, he was no less careful to express their predictions in a language which was correspondently uniform and consistent, exactly cast and moulded for the purpose. This is strikingly apparent through every part of the sacred code ; and is no where more conspicuous than in the uniformity which is wonderfully preserved between the Old Testament and the New. As the prophets were bred in the same school to qualify them for this necessary uniformity of prophetic style ; so the Evangelical writers were all Jews bred under the Law & the Prophets, and thus qualified to extend it from one dispensation to another, and to make it pervade the whole religious system ^a. The Greek is known to

^a The reasons assigned by Dr. Campbell in his *Dissertations*, p. 12, for the Apostles mixing Hebrewisms and Chaldaisms in their writings are extremely defective, as this *Uniformity of Scripture* is, I apprehend, the chief.

differ from the Hebrew and other oriental tongues, as much in idiom and construction as it does in character: notwithstanding all this, though the words of the New Testament be in Greek, the idiom and phraseology are invariably Hebrew. The whole is, indeed, Hebrew ideas and phrases clothed in Greek. To prepare for this extraordinary mixture by adapting the Greek tongue to the Hebrew idiom, and to familiarize it to their use, the Septuagint version of the ancient scriptures had been providentially made, which is the Hebrew phraseology in Greek words; and which formed a model for the use of Evangelists and Apostles. And thus, by an uniformity of language, the figurative and symbolical predictions delivered under the Law are enabled to meet their correspondencies in the Gospel; where they were either interpreted, or extended to future ages of the church.

This UNIFORMITY°, as the key of interpretation, should, therefore, at any rate be preserved

* The translator of Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets seems to adopt this idea of *Uniformity*. * The same original and
 ' its

preserved in translation : and, upon this ground of reasoning, we may subscribe the opinion of Erasmus

‘ its derivatives according to the leading different senses, and also the same phrase, should be respectively translated by the same correspondent English word or phrase ; except where a distinct representation of a general idea, or the nature of the English language, requires a different mode of expression.—Not only the sense, but the beauty and force, of many passages depend on a version not deviating from Uniformity without a decisive reason.’

Bp. Newcome’s Pref. 24, &c.

‘ A fourth quality of a good translator is as strict an Uniformity of style and manner as is consistent with the foregoing properties.’ Dr. Geddes’ Prospectus, 136.

I wish the arguments for *Uniformity*, supported by these two great authorities, would weigh with our northern translator of the Gospels, and induce him either to reconsider the following position, or to be very careful of indulging in that *Variety* which he seems to cherish. ‘ There are cases wherein some things may be done, nay, ought to be done by a translator for the sake of Variety; for the sacred historians do not always confine themselves to the same words in expressing the same thoughts. This is owing to a freedom from all solicitude about their language. An unvarying recourse to the same words for expressing the same thoughts, would, in fact, shew one to be solicitous about *Uniformity*, and uncommonly attentive to it.’

Campbell’s Diff. XII. part i. p. 594.

The language of the inspired writers is of various kinds; sententious, didactic, parabolical, and narrative; and the Uniformity

Erasmus and Beza. *Veterem interpretem*, says Beza, *Erasmus merito in eo reprehendit, quod unum idemque vocabulum sæpe diversis modis explicat. Atque in eo ipso quoties peccat? Leviculum hoc est dices. Ego aliter censeo, nisi cum ita necesse est, in his quidem libris in quibus sæpe videas mirifica quædam arcona veluti unius vocabuli involucris tegi.*

IV. In regard to the ELEGANCES OF LANGUAGE and HARMONY OF PERIODS, those qualifications of good translation held in esteem by our modern adventurers, they have their foundation in the shifting caprice of fashion and in the varying refinements of taste, and are those superficial accomplishments with which the translator of a classic author may sacrifice to popular fame. He feels himself a sort of rival of his author, and partly interests himself in the sense and entirely in the lan-

guage; formity of some may be of more importance than of others; but which these are it may not be easy or necessary to determine. Their meaning can be only known from their words, and where these differ, the other may not be precisely the same. This passion for Variety is no favourable omen in a sacred translator.

guage;

guage; the latter of which, tricked up in the fashionable, but fading ornaments of the day, may be a fairer candidate in the present age for public favour. The dignity and simplicity of Scriptural version, in which the translator has no power over the sense or over the letter, reject these whimsical and adventitious ornaments. Where the grosser inelegances and improprieties of language are avoided, *ea effigies laudatur*, says Le Clerc, *non quæ vulgum formosum, sed qualis est revera spectantium oculis offert* *. The Holy Bible will appear in a more characteristic and becoming dress, invested in its native simplicity and grandeur, than if adorned in all the fancy of modern elegance; whether dilated through the finical and affected sentences of a fashionable historian, or swelled out in all the pompous and unclassical formalities of the Johnsonian period.

This idea of Scriptural Translation, grounded upon the principle that ‘The Holy Bible, in manner as well as in matter, is different from all other books, and, therefore, requires a different treatment,’ is more or less

* Prolegom. in Pent. Diff. ii. § 4.

repugnant

repugnant from the opinions advanced by our modern translators, and the rules which they severally prescribe. In support of the preceding arguments for a translation of the bible which is as *literal* and *idiomatical*, as *faithful*, without attempting to do away any obscurities which do not attach upon the letter, and as *uniform*, as possible, I shall, therefore, quote one example out of many that may be produced.

In the 21st Chapter of Saint Matthew and the 20th of Saint Luke, our Lord represents himself and the kingdom of the Gospel under the symbol of a *stone λίθος*, as the ancient prophets had uniformly done before him¹. To this he applies the two verbs *συνθλασθήσεται* and *λίμνησται*, figurative expressions, which had also been employed by the ancient prophets². Of the former translators have given a literal rendering *confingetur*, *he shall be broken*; but the latter, which is a bolder figure taken from the rustic employment of *winnowing corn*, like many other prophetic figures, appearing, in their judgment, when applied to a *stone* in

¹ See Genesis xlix. Isaiah xxviii. 16, viii. 14. Daniel ii. 34. Psalm cxviii. 22. Rom. ix. 32, 33.

² Zechariah xii. 3. Isaiah vii. 13, 14, 15. xxx. 14. Jeremiah xix. Daniel ii. 34, 35, 44.

its

its literal sense, not only obscure but utterly absurd, rather than impose upon our Lord in their translation what they thought no sense at all, they judged it better, by some pious rule or other, to impose upon him, and to help him out with, a little sense of their own*. Instead, therefore, of *ventilabit, it will blow him away like chaff*, they have rendered it by *conteret*^t, *comminuet*^u, *will grind him to powder*^v, and one very lately, *shall crush him to pieces*^w; in every one of which the original figure is totally lost, and substituted by another, by which the meaning is completely changed^x. And, after all their pious labour to give the passage some meaning of their own, it has puzzled commentators and critics more than any other in the Gospels; insomuch that their explanations of it are not only vague and conjectural, but quite different from each other.

* See Lowth's Notes on Isaiah lxiv. 5. p. 271, 272.

^t The Old Version, Erasmus and Castalio.

^u Beza.

^v English Translation.

^w Dr. Campbell.

^x All the translations I have seen entirely misrepresent the figure except the Gothic of Benzelius, which renders it by *dissepabit*, and gives *ventilabit* in the margin.

In applying these two figures to the emblem of the stone, our Lord was, in the *uniform* use of the prophetic style, illustrating, confirming, and extending, as he and his Apostles often did, two ancient and very important prophecies. In the verses directly preceding, he quotes the prophetic words of the 18th Psalm¹, telling the Jews that they were on the point of being fulfilled in the Gospel being taken from them on account of their inveterate obstinacy, and given to others better qualified to receive it. “ Did ye never read
“ the scriptures, The *stone* which the build-
“ ers rejected, the same is become the head
“ of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing,
“ and it is marvellous in our eyes? There-
“ fore I say unto you, The Kingdom of God
“ shall be taken from you, and given to a
“ nation bringing forth the fruits thereof².” And in the next verse he repeats the same symbol to which he applies the two figures in question, confirming two farther prophecies relating to the Jews—by that of being *broken*, *συνθλασθησεται*, he confirms the prediction of

¹ Verse 22.

² Matt. xxi. 42, 43. See Luke xx. 17.

Isaiah and Jeremiah, which signified that, after such rejection from the kingdom of the Gospel, the Jews should have their theocratic polity dissolved, and that their community would be broken. “Sanctify the Lord your God,” saith Isaiah, “and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he shall be for a sanctuary: but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken^a:” which figurative and symbolical enunciation is more directly expressed by Jeremiah in his representative action of *breaking the potter’s vessel*^b—Notwithstanding this severe enunciation, there was a reserve in the divine mercy in favour of this people of God, that, though rejected and broken, “a remnant should be saved^c,” and which, however dispersed throughout the world, should, at some distant period, be reunited and restored. The subject of prophetic enuncia-

^a Isaiah viii. 13, 14, 15.

^b See xix. chap. and Isaiah xxx. 14.

^c See Isaiah xxvii. 32. and Rom. xi.

tion were the four great empires of the world, which were finally to give place to this kingdom of the stone; and, by the second figure *λειτουργία*, our Lord confirms another illustrious prophecy respecting a different people reserved to a different fate, the last of these empires, the successor and representative of the three former; which prophecy foretold that it was not only to be broken, as the Jewish polity, but that every trace and vestige of it should vanish as a spectre from the earth, and *be blown away as chaff*. That department in the prophetic system, which relates to the future fate and fortunes of this new and spiritual kingdom of the stone, fell especially to the share of the prophet Daniel, whose prophetic words in his declaration of Nebuchadnezzar's dream are exactly correspondent to this figure, “Thou sawest, till
“that a stone was cut out without hands,
“which smote the image upon his feet of iron
“and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then
“was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver,
“and the gold, broken to pieces together, and
“became *like the chaff of the summer threshing*
“*floors; and the wind carried them away,*

Q 2

“that

“ *that no place was found for them*^d ;” and in the interpretation which directly follows, as translated by the LXXII, the prophet explains these last words by *λικμησει*, the very word which our Lord employs^e.

Of these three prophecies relating to his Gospel, to which Christ gave a confirmation and extension, the two former have been completely and wonderfully fulfilled, in the rejection of the Jews, and the dissolution of their polity; and no inconsiderable portion of the third has met with its completion in the history of the world. For, of the three great prophetic empires, the Babylonish, the Medo-Persian, and the Macedonian, no more trace or vestige hath remained for many ages, than if they had never existed; and in regard to the fourth, which is the Roman in its full extent, Imperial and Papal, it has been long upon the wain, and seems to be vanishing as a shadow from the globe: when the “ stone
“ that smote the image will become a moun-
“ tain, and fill the whole earth; when the
“ kingdoms of the world shall become the
“ kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ^f;

^d Daniel ii. 34, 35.

^e Daniel ii. 44. *Αυτίησει ὁ θεὸς τὰ ἔθνη βασιλείαν, ἥτις λεπίυνει καὶ ΛΙΚΜΗΣΕΙ πάσης τῆς βασιλείας.*

^f Ibid.

“ But

“ But the vision is yet for an appointed time ;
 “ but in the end it will speak and not lie^s.”

Instead of putting a new sense upon the word *λικμησει*, by which the figure was lost, had translators only rendered it literally and directly, that *uniformity* would have been preserved, which is the true key of interpretation^h: and, instead of having recourse to conjecture and invention in order to remove the difficulty of the passage which arises from a false translation, commentators would have been led to its just interpretation in the book of Daniel ; and one of the most important and extensive prophecies of our Lord would not have been lost to our understanding for many agesⁱ.

An

^s Habakkuk li. 3.

^h Inde hoc saltem collegi potest, uno eodemque vocabulo Græcum scriptorem uti ; ideoque locum unum cum altero conferri debere. Hen. Steph. Præf. in Nov. Test.

ⁱ Our Northern translator of the Gospels is a strong advocate for *Variety*, as a qualification of scriptural translation ; by which he must frequently sacrifice that *Uniformity* of words and phrases, which is here contended for. In labouring at this variety, he has given us no promising specimen of his translation in the place before us : for he is not only guilty of the same fault with his predecessors in departing from the literal rendering, but, in his love of variety, he has differed

Q 3

from

An *unprejudiced*, a *literal*, a *faithful*, and an *uniform* translation of the whole bible, both Old and New Testaments, is that learned work, which is more earnestly to be desired than any other. Besides all other advantages,

from them all, and is just so much inferior. He has not only lost the figure in λικμησει by rendering it *will crush them to pieces*, but that of συνθλασθησεῖαι too, by translating it *bruised* instead of *broken*; by which the prophetic meaning is totally destroyed. His Dissertations promise better: and I hope his rendering of this passage is not a true specimen of his work; as it is, in every respect, much inferior to the old translation. The symbol, which had been employed by Moses, David, Isaiah, Zachariah, St. Paul, and Christ himself, to represent the kingdom of the Gospel, the old translators have dignified by the proper article THE Stone, by which it is rendered *particular* and *supereminent*; but the above translator has diminished it into A Stone, making it *general* and *common*. In our Lord's prediction of the rejection of the Jews and the call of the Gentiles, the words καὶ ἐς θαυμασὴν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν, which the old translation rendered, *and it is marvellous in our eyes*, he has rendered, *and we behold it with admiration*. Now *wonder* or *surprise*, expressed by *marvellous*, is one idea, and *admiration*, though akin, is quite another, having in it a mixture of *love* and *approbation*: in which light the Jews, of whom the words are spoken, could not be supposed to view their own rejection.

this

this would do more in reconciling parties and persuasions in religion, by laying a foundation of one true interpretation of scripture, and in bringing them together into one fold under one shepherd (a consummation by all Christians devoutly to be wished!), than any other human expedient. In the execution of this great work the books of the Hebrew Scriptures cannot be too minutely studied, too extensively collated, and too accurately compared: and the Septuagint, which is a safe and general guide to the knowledge of them all, should never be neglected. It should, indeed, be particularly consulted, and attended to through the whole of the scriptural translation, as forming the general model of the work. When the Old Testament has been thus consistently and uniformly translated, it will prepare the way for the execution of what remains: for the translation of the New Testament should be engrafted upon that of the Old; and made a part of the same whole through the medium of the Septuagint.

As this is a work to be desired and contended for by Christians of all denominations; in the preparation for it the learned of all

Q 4

countries

countries should concur, and in the execution of it those of every communion should unite their labours. Too much learning cannot be employed, if seasoned with humility, too much sagacity cannot be exerted, if tempered with sobriety, too much judgment cannot be exercised, if conducted with discretion. In this important undertaking all party opinions should be lost in oblivion: otherwise, instead of one, we shall have as many bibles, as there are sects. Certain rules should be enacted and religiously observed: for if men be left at large to translate the bible with the same capricious taste and variety of genius by which they translate other books; we shall have as many texts as men employed, and as many styles as geniuses. The bible, which is one consistent body of light and truth, will be more varied in its meaning and metamorphosed in its form, than any other book; in proportion as it is more different in its authors, more various in its language, more mysterious in its sense, more complex in its design, and more important in its end.

In

In this chapter I have attempted a compendious sketch of THE RIGHT USE OF REASON IN MATTERS OF RELIGION, as a general out-line of the Study of Divinity.

So far from superseding the exercise of REASON, Theology, we see, opens the largest, the richest, and the most various field for its cultivation; in which all the powers and provinces of the UNDERSTANDING, the WILL, and the IMAGINATION, are engaged. And to prevent error in this vast and various walk of science, which is more easy and more useful than to correct it, a general remedy will be to mark distinctly the different offices of Reason as it advances from one stage to another in rearing the edifice of the Christian Faith.

1. The Divine Testimony or Record, the Principle of Theology, is contained in a book presenting a certain form of words: and to trace Reason up the ascending scale, in the reverse of the order pursued in the preceding pages, its first office is to enquire into the *history* of that book—THE AUTHENTICITY of the holy Scriptures.

2. This

2. This book professes to have been written by men divinely assisted and inspired, and of course infallible in what they wrote ; a second office is, therefore, to inquire into the truth of this *Inspiration*—The AUTHORITY of the Holy Scriptures.

3. This Book is found to contain a number of truths doctrinal and moral, which are called mysteries, and which are asserted to be the immediate dictates of God himself ; and, to evince this great point to men, a number of supernatural *Tests* and *Evidences* are inseparably connected with these Mysteries, so that if the former were true, the latter must be so ; a third office of Reason, is, therefore, to examine these Tests and Evidences—The DIVINITY of the Holy Scriptures.

4. This book was written and early translated in ancient languages, and has its meaning conveyed, and often couched and concealed, in particular Styles and forms of writing ; and a fourth office is, to understand these *ancient Languages*, and to unfold these peculiar *Styles*—The INTERPRETATION of the Holy Scriptures.

5. And

5. And as this Book was given for the use and advantage of all *Nations*, a fifth office of Reason in matters of Religion is so to *convert* it into different Languages, that it may be rightly and properly understood by those who speak them—The TRANSLATION of the Holy Scriptures.

When these several offices are duly executed, the edifice of Theology is complete, Reason resigns to Faith, which takes immediate possession, and embraces at once, with an implicit and firm assent, all the contents of this mysterious Book. They are as the *Principles* of truth, which reject all direct attempts to judge, to compare, or to account for them. They are not the *Posita* of Philosophers; but the *Placita* of God.

6. But though Reason may not directly intrude into the temple of Faith, which she hath thus erected, it is her farther duty, as the handmaid of Religion, to honour this queen of heaven with all attention and observance, to contemplate her excellence, to illustrate her doctrines, to promote her interests, to behold her fair beauty, and to bring all her children, the arts and sciences, to minister
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in her courts. And, as her *Precepts* or moral duties are delivered as the immediate will of God, a further office is, to propose them to the will of men with all the advantage of their truth and excellence seconded by all the powers of persuasion—The MORALITY of the Holy Scriptures.

In all which various offices of Theological Reasoning, which is different in the aggregate from every other kind, a sound understanding and a good heart will be found more useful and propitious guides than Mood and Figure.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Of Theological TRUTH.

THUS, the prize cannot be won without labour in the race: and, when the prize is won, though, in its principle, in its utility, and in its end, THEOLOGICAL TRUTH transcend every other kind, in proportion as the heaven is higher than the earth; yet, derived as it is into the human understanding through such a various and complicated train of Reasoning, and viewed in its just logical proportion, it is not only *different* from all others, but INFERIOR in its force and evidence. Its objects are not only removed from the apprehension of all Sense, but many of them are placed out of the comprehension of all Intellect. Though its *moral* evidence be strong and convincing, that is not
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of itself sufficient to support its claim: and the scene in which its *external* evidences were displayed to men, on which its authority mainly rests, has been shifted for many ages. However divine and infallible in itself, the Testimony of God is conveyed through the channel of human tradition, and made dependent on the fallible support of the *Testimony of men*: and the substance of this truth itself, as recorded and conveyed to us, is a matter of various and difficult *interpretation*.

The assent by which this singular species of Truth, so superior in its intrinsic worth, but so inferior in its logical consideration, is distinguished by the name of *Faith*, which, however transcendent both in its origin and in its end, is humbled by the *means* through which it takes possession of the mind; and is, by that very circumstance, rendered, “ the ‘ greatest of all virtues.’ ”

If this TRUTH be of such universal and immense importance, why, it may be asked, does its omniscient author, whose mercies are over all his works, keep it so much concealed from men? Why are its doctrines so mysterious?

mysterious? Why are its evidences put at so great a distance from our view, and made so painful and laborious in the acquisition? Why is the written word so obscure and concealed, couched in parabolical expression, and involved in symbols and emblematic figures? and why is the conviction resulting from the whole of revelation so much *weaker* and logically *inferior* to that of the other kinds of truth, which are much less universal in their use, and much less important in their end? Other truths can only lead men with comfort and advantage through the present transitory life; this professes to open them a passage and to ensure them a portion in a future and a better, which will be permanent: and why, rejoins the mathematician, is it not founded on principles as self-evident, why is it not so clearly and easily to be deduced, and why is it not crowned with as strong and full conviction, as my demonstrations?—And the same questions may be put by the patrons and professors of all other parts of learning in their turn. They may jointly demand—Why does this celestial knowledge, which flows immediately from the fountain of light and truth, derive

derive from him such weak and clouded beams, as to shine upon the human mind through a denser and more complex medium than any other ?

To these questions one general answer might suffice, That Truth, like every thing else, is of many and different kinds, each of which has it its own proper nature, by which it is adapted to the particular use and end for which it was designed : that this difference, in whatever it may consist, cannot operate to the rejection of any ; but that all, of whatever kind, are equally entitled to the reasonable assent of the human mind, for which they were intended, though not operating with equal degrees of evidence : that ethical is not to be exploded because it is not physical, nor physical because it is not mathematical : and that the uses and ends, which they are severally calculated to answer, are by no means in proportion to their strength and brightness : that it is, therefore, incumbent on all reasonable men, instead of prescribing the conditions on which Truth is to be received, to embrace it with gratitude upon the terms on which it is given ; valuing it according to the measure of
its

its utility; and resolving its different appearance and effect into the reason of Him who gave it, whether that reason can be known or not.

But, beside this general answer, a special one may be made from the *End* which Theological Truth has professedly in view; from which we may infer an obvious reason, why it is constituted what it is.

Future Happiness, in the more immediate fruition of the Deity, exalted by his presence and crowned by his love, is the end of that Faith by which this truth is to be embraced. Frequent and explicit are the declarations of holy scripture, that the “pure in heart shall see God^k,” and that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord^l” It is therefore necessary that this *purity of heart*, which is so indispensable to the end, should become an ingredient of the mean, which is destined to open the way and to lead men to it. In order, therefore, to give Faith this purifying influence over the heart, the Truth, which is its object, is withdrawn from the fuller and more immediate view of the understanding.

^k Mal. v. 8.

^l Heb. xii. 14.

By this divine expedient an intermediate discipline is instituted, in which all the best affections of the heart are voluntarily displayed, and all the moral virtues exercised, in the act of embracing, honouring, and obeying, the truth.

In this short probationary stage of being, men are only in the infancy of their existence; and, to train them up to a maturity of moral virtue in which their manhood is to consist, they are appointed to “walk by faith, and not “by sight.” In the whole of his religious dispensation, therefore, he is “a God that “hideth himself;” and the search of him in his world of Grace, is calculated by his wisdom to call into action every generous disposition and virtuous inclination of the heart, which is devoted to religion. The task of making its first offering at the shrine of Faith may be painful and laborious; for all the evil affections, which stand in the way, are first to be removed. By exercise and habit, however, it will become not only easy but delightful; till the pleasure which results, independent of the reward, will amply repay the labour.

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In the institution, therefore, of this *probationary Discipline*, so requisite to the end, we have an adequate solution of all the objections which can be made to the difficulty and obscurity of Theological Truth. He, whose superabundant love undertook all that was requisite to be done, in the reconciliation between God and man, who had the exclusive privilege of ‘knowing what is in man,’ and who treated him according to his nature, saw the necessity of this discipline, and adapted the condition of his religion to it: which, we may conclude, could not have taken place, had the Truths of Theology been any other, or unfolded in any other way, than what they are; and had the Faith by which they are to be embraced, been a different species of assent.

Were the evidences and objects of our most holy Faith placed upon a level with those of Sense, this moral discipline, so necessary to the end in view, would be removed from earth; and other evil consequences would have ensued to mankind in general.

Being as full, and obvious, and easy to be evinced, as those of many other kinds of truth,

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the evidences of religion would force the conviction of the understanding independently of the will, without calling forth the exercise of those moral virtues, by which alone man is qualified for all the sublime offices of religion, and deserving its reward. Resting upon such proofs as invite no spontaneous desire or emotion of the mind, and require no application of industry or labour of discussion, and assenting to such truths as are obvious of themselves and easy of admission, Faith would not be what it was intended : it would be a very easy and superficial accomplishment, in the exercise of which, though the understanding might be improved, the heart would have small concern ; and though an intellectual, it could not be a moral, virtue. It could not be the condition of a Religion whose criterion is *holiness*, and which is accommodated to every character and description of men.

But, from the constitution of Theologic Truth, Faith becomes a moral, more than an intellectual, virtue ; more the voluntary offering of the heart, than the necessary result of the understanding. The evidences of religion are not so overpowering as to compel the assent

of all : they are only made sufficient for the rational conviction of every candid and well-disposed, and for the religious conduct of every virtuous and willing, mind. And thus it is that Faith, being a moral virtue, is equally accommodated to all men, and that its reward is equally laid open to their enjoyment.

To search and to know the truth by which they are to be saved, is, indeed, the duty of every one : it is, however, experimentally known that, according to the œconomy of this world, and the condition of human life, all do not enjoy equal opportunities, all are not blest with equal powers. As the end of Faith is, however, equally the privilege of all ; it is so constituted, that they who seek the truth with diligence and desire, with a humble and willing mind, and with a hope full of immortality, according to the advantages they enjoy ; and make it, when found, the rule of their religious conduct, will be entitled to all its benefits. And, the objects of Faith, which men are commanded to embrace with the firmest trust and confidence, on the authority of him “ that beareth witness,” are many of them concealed from the most learned in-

vestigation and the most penetrating eye: so that, in the household of Faith, the learned and the unlearned are eventually put on equal terms, and may jointly exclaim in admiration, " Lord, I believe, help thou mine
" unbelief."

Thus, Faith is not so much to *know*, as to *embrace*, the truth: and to all, whose minds are willing and well-disposed, the evidences of religion, after such a probationary and preparatory discipline, will be abundantly sufficient, and its objects will be sufficiently clear, to ensure that salvation which is the end of Faith; but to all others, however superior and excellent their knowledge, they will prove, as they were intended, totally insufficient.

Were their evidences as easy and obvious, the truths of religion would, by the vulgar, be held in similar estimation with the commonest truths of common life; subject to that indignity and neglect shewn to whatever is of easy acquisition and common use. To the learned they would not afford that extensive field for the exercise of reason, in which all the active virtues of the mind and imagination
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are put in motion, and supported, by the best affections and exertions of the will. And, were the objects of Faith revealed in all their glory, were the heavenly mansions displayed to view, all the powers of intellect would be lost in ecstatic wonder. Instead of being employed in those duties and occupations necessary to their existence and accommodation here, the faculties of men would be abstracted from all those earthly objects and concerns, with which they are connected. Instead of employing themselves in those offices, which are adapted to their probationary state, as inhabitants of this earth, and by which they are to be prepared to become inhabitants of heaven, they would be led to undervalue and despise them, in the anticipation of that superior and celestial state, before they were qualified for its enjoyment.

Thus, though the assent which accompanies the conviction of all the other kinds of truth, be only a virtue of the understanding, constituting the Wisdom which is human; Faith is of the Wisdom which is divine, which is ‘first pure, then perfect,’ penetrating the

heart and subduing its affections. This *purity of heart*, which alone can qualify men to see and to enjoy their maker in the intercourse of his love, is the great object which religion invariably holds in view, and which it every where promotes. The nature of its evidences, the sublimity of its doctrines, the excellence of its precepts, the perfection of its examples, its regenerating grace—every part of the Christian system has a direct tendency to improve the heart and to perfect moral virtue. The image of God, that celestial character, originally impressed on the human mind, however injured and effaced, it is the business of religion to repair, and to restore, after a course of probationary discipline, to more than pristine beauty.

In consequence of this *inferiority* of THEOLOGIC TRUTH, that such is the true nature of that *Faith*, which, in the act of embracing it with a full confidence and assent, becomes the greatest of virtues, is strikingly apparent from the different dispensation of religious information to men in different circumstances and
ages

ages of the world—to those *holy men of old*, in respect of the distant objects of the faith by which they were justified—to the *Apostles and more immediate witnesses* of Christ—and to *ourselves in these distant times*.

To men placed in such very different situations Theologic Truth appeared with a very different aspect, as viewed from different points: notwithstanding which, the whole religious œconomy is so wonderfully adjusted, that the Faith, by which it is entertained, and by which they are to be justified together, is in all the self-same virtue, interesting the will as much as engaging the intellect, and addressed to the heart more directly than to the understanding.

1. Though the evidences of a supernatural interposition were dispensed with a liberal hand through the patriarchal ages, the celestial light shone upon them as in a dark, and from a distant, place; and the objects of their faith could be seen only as through an indistinct and clouded medium. Excepting that which regulated their moral conduct, all other religious instruction was wrapped up in a figurative

figurative and ænigmatical cover, and made inaccessible, in its most important sense, by the apprehension even of those through whose mouth it came. Relying upon a *Promise* delivered, at first, in obscure and general terms, and exhibited, in future generations, under such types and figurative representations, as were only a shadow of better things to come^m, their Faith was founded on a trust in God resulting from their piety and virtue. Under this dark and dubious cloud, which nothing but the personal rising of the sun of righteousness could effectually dispel after the lapse of many ages, the holy men of old were placed; and their Faith was only ‘the substance of a future hope,’ deriving that excellent quality, by which it was so triumphant, from that obedience and pious resignation by which it was accompaniedⁿ. Although, to their dim and imperfect sight, “clouds and darkness were round about him,” they rested in a confident assurance, which their virtue had supplied, that “righteousness and judgment were the habitation of his throne.”

^m See Col. ii. 17. Heb. viii. 5. x. 1.

ⁿ See xi. chap. Heb.

Prophecy

Prophecy was the principal mean of religious instruction in these early ages. This was delivered in a mysterious and ænigmatical shape, that it might afford exercise to the moral faculties and voluntary dispositions of the willing and well-disposed ; and that, whilst it was calculated to be the test of truth, it might be, at the same time, the reward of virtue. Of this sublime intention of the inspirer we have a full and unequivocal assurance in the angel's reply to the prophet Daniel, who was kept in ignorance of the very predictions he was commissioned to pronounce.

“ And I heard,” said the prophet, “ but I understood not : then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things ? And he said, Go thy way Daniel ; for the words are closed up and sealed to the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white, and tried ; but the wicked shall do wickedly : none of the wicked shall understand ; but the wise shall understand °.”

The faith of Abraham stands forward as a prominent example, and will ever remain a splendid monument, of his virtue. Dark in

• Daniel xii. 8, 9, 10.

its evidence and distant in its object, it was sanctified by his ready and unreserved obedience to the will of God ; and from thence “ accounted to him for righteousness.” By virtue of such a Faith he was denominated “ The Righteous,” and constituted “ The Father of the Faithful,” of all the religious in all future ages, who believe and obey after his example, and who, in participation of his future reward, will be “ blest with faithful Abraham^p.” As a temporal reward for that singular and magnanimous instance of such a Faith displayed in stretching his son upon the altar, the Almighty, indeed, indulged the aged patriarch, in the illustrious act, with an indirect and distant view of that future day, when the whole mystery of his faith was to be evolved in the personal sacrifice of his Son upon the cross^q. For as, on the part of Abraham, this was the most signal example of obedience ; so, on the part of God, it was a signal instance of the language of prophetic action, which was interpreted by Christ himself, in that singular declaration, by which the Jews were so much offended, and by

^p See Gal. chap. iii.

^q See Gen. chap. xxii.

which

which commentators have been as much confounded—"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad."

Had the information and conviction of the understanding been the sole, or, indeed, the main, object, in the intention of the inspirer in these early ages; instead of delivering his religious information in such a dark and mysterious form, he would have adopted a mode of supernatural communication more immediate and direct: but He, who had determined by an unalterable decree, that "without holiness no man should see him," had a farther and greater end in view. Religious instruction was communicated in such a way and with such qualifications, as to excite the desires, to exercise the industry, and to improve the virtue, of these venerable men: so that the first and best offering which they made to religion, became the necessary offering of the heart.

Such was the nature of that holy Faith, by which "the elders obtained a good report," anticipating its object in dark and distant prof-

John viii. 56.

pects,

pects, but full of pious affection, anxious desire, and holy trust. And, after enumerating an illustrious phalanx of saints and martyrs, who were justified by this faith, the Apostle has given a reason why they were withheld from the enjoyment of the Promise, most encouraging to the virtue, and flattering to the hope, of the partakers of such a faith, in all times since it was fulfilled. “ God
 “ having provided some better thing for us ;
 “ that they without us should not be made
 “ perfect :” but that the whole family and household of the faithful, in every age, as children of their father Abraham, should be justified together.

2. The circumstances and situation of things at the advent of Christ, and his conduct and that of his Apostles in preaching the gospel, will afford us more ample illustration of the true genius of Faith.

His divine commission was opened by an illustrious prophet specially sent to prepare the way for his reception, by preaching “ the
 “ baptism of repentance,” or the internal

* Heb. xi. 40.

purgation

purgation of the heart, as the prelude to that external baptism which is emblematical of it, and which he, therefore, ordained to be the initiating rite of his religion.

On assuming his prophetic character, he first addressed himself to those learned Jews, who, from the superiority of their station and the ritual offices which they filled, ought to have been prepared to receive him as the Messiah, both by hearts purified after the institution of the Law, and by the application of Prophecies fulfilled in him, to which it was their office to attend. Wanting, however, the first qualification, they became totally lost to the second. By a perversion of judgment the most obstinate and vicious, they were led to misinterpret the obvious meaning of their prophets: and when he displayed before their eyes the most stupendous miracles, “ their hearts being hardened ” through the deceitfulness of sin,” their understandings revolted from the conviction of the double light”. Their Faith was blasted by an obduracy of mind, the effect of many gross and habitual vices, particularly the predominant one of

† John xii. 40.

“ John xii. 37, 38.

pride,

pride, and that of the most inveterate species—the pride of knowledge. Wanting that charity which alone could edify, their knowledge was vain and puffed up. The vices of the heart obstructed the light of the understanding, “therefore,” saith the beloved apostle, “they could not believe:” which wonderful perversion of all the faculties of the human mind in rejecting his Gospel, was an event so singular and important as to be the subject of a signal prophecy, by which it was converted into an evidence of the very truth which it rejected. “That the saying of “Esaïas might be fulfilled, He hath blinded “their eyes and hardened their heart, that “they should not see with their eyes, nor “understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.”

Habitual goodness of disposition was the object of his search, and the only subject of his improvement. To try whether their faith could have its foundation laid in virtue, he delivered his saving truths under the cover of parables^w, that he might provoke

^v John xii. 40. See Rom. x. 21.

^w See Matth. xiii. and Mark iv.

their

their voluntary endeavours to understand. Had he given them in open terms, their divine power, supported by the miracles by which they were confirmed, would have disarmed their obstinacy, and they would have been converted and healed by a compulsive power, in opposition to their will, contrary to the whole intent of his religion. But, by couching them under parables, he held them in reserve, so “that seeing they might see, and not “perceive, and hearing they might hear, and “not understand.”

From such unpromising subjects of a holy Faith he turned his attention to others of an opposite description, with this severe and pointed sentence, “For judgment am I come “into the world, that they which see not, “might see; and they which see, might be “made blind.” These were those humble characters, who were possessed of the first, but who had no great pretension to the second, qualification of a rational faith: in whom he fulfilled another prophecy, by “being found of them that sought him not; “and being made manifest to them that asked

* Mark iv. 12.

† John ix. 39.

“not after him^a.” Their minds, though uninformed, were well-disposed; though ignorant, unprejudiced; though weak, yet innocent. Possessed, in a sufficient degree, of the first and more essential qualification, they were proper subjects of a kingdom to be founded and administered in righteousness: and, under the care and discipline of such a master, they would in time acquire the second, by having their understanding enlarged and strengthened. From his miracles they acknowledged, with an ingenuous candour, his divine authority. By shewing themselves ready to obey him and willing to be instructed, they possessed the necessary qualifications to be his disciples. “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, I will love him, and will manifest myself to him^a.” If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God^b.”

But, however open their hearts and willing to obey, their minds were weak and tender: he, therefore, disciplined them with the most attentive caution, lest, by alarming their apprehensions, he should subvert or check those

^a Rom. x. 20.^a John xiv. 21.^b John vii. 17.

virtues

virtues which were to be of voluntary growth; improving by degrees the one, and strengthening by degrees the other. He did not unfold to them all at once the mysteries of his kingdom, unable as they were to understand such deep, or to bear such dismal, truths. To excite in them, however, a voluntary curiosity and desire to be informed, and, at the same time, to conceal from them, till they were strengthened and prepared for its reception, the awful subjects of his information, he taught them in parables: and, after they had sufficiently employed the best affections of the mind in a virtuous endeavour to know their meaning, those which he had delivered in public before the Scribes and Pharisees, he explained to them in private, as they approved themselves “able to receive them.” Upon their requiring the reason why he taught under this parabolical disguise, and not openly; to encourage them to go on from virtue to virtue, he set them, mean as they were in their own esteem, above their haughty teachers. “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to

* Mark iv. 2.

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“ them

“ them in parables^d,” to stigmatize their obstinacy, to punish their vice, and to confound their pride. And, to illustrate this important point of the progressive discipline and voluntary establishment of his kingdom in the heart, he delivered two expressive parables; that of the *Sower*^e, and that of the *Talents*^f.

After the chosen twelve were sufficiently disciplined and confirmed, he commissioned them to preach the kingdom of God with power, and “ appointed Seventy others also “ to go before his face into every city and “ place whither he himself should come^g :” and, when these humble instruments told him, on their return, of their success in preaching the Gospel and the progress they had made in Faith, “ in that hour Jesus rejoiced in “ spirit and said, I thank thee, O Father, “ Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast “ hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes : even

^d Matt. xiii. 13, 14.

^e Matt. xiii. 3 to 23. and Luke viii. 4 to 15.

^f Matt. xxv. 14 to 30. and Luke xix. 11 to 27.

^g Luke x. 1.

“ so,

“ so, O Father ; for so it seemeth good in
“ thy sight ^h. ”

He could have opened their understanding in an instant, and have filled it with all knowledge : but, “ knowing what is in man, and “ whereof he is made,” he treated him as a rational and moral being, leaving the mind to its own voluntary motion, to furnish itself with virtue, to strengthen in goodness, and to grow in grace. As it improved in virtue, he increased its knowledge : the latter of which, without the former, was no qualification of a religion which is holy and undefiled. Failing of this moral improvement so indispensable to a sound and saving Faith, after all the wonders he had seen, and the divine instructions he had received, one of the Twelve fell an unhappy victim to this important truth. Even the Eleven, who continued faithful to the end, were suffered, for the same moral purposes, to remain in ignorance of the true nature of his spiritual kingdom, till after his resurrection ⁱ. Knowing, however, that they were vessels seasoned and prepared, by a long course of severe and try-

^h Luke x. 21.

ⁱ See Matt. xx. 21. and Acts i. 6.

ing discipline, for its full reception; at last he poured upon them his Holy Spirit, to open their understanding, and to lead them into all truth.

Such was that Discipline by which the Apostles were trained, through scenes of darkness gradually enlightened, in a virtuous and holy Faith, by the hand of Christ himself: and his example towards them they followed in their conduct towards others, observing on all occasions the great rule of Faith which he had delivered—"Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath^k."

3. Whether it be that of the patriarch, that of the apostle, or that of the modern believer; as it was in the beginning, it will continue unto the end: for as there "is one Lord, and one Baptism, so there is only one Faith^l," which is the same virtue in all

^k Matt. xiii. 12. & xxv. 29. Luke xviii. 26.

^l Eph. iv. 5.

ages,

ages, requiring the same joint qualifications of heart and understanding.

Before the advent of Christ, "Faith was the substance of things hoped for," brought into the mind by anticipation : and, since his final departure and the præternatural operation of the Holy Ghost, it is "the evidence of things not seen," brought into the mind by retrospection^m. It is evermore the glory of our Religion, that it constitutes a willing as well as a reasonable, service ; and the situation and circumstances under which we are placed, in these distant times, in regard to its truths and evidences, are such as render necessary the same virtuous endeavour and voluntary exertion ; such as arouse every lovely affection of the mind, in the search and adoption of theologic truth ; and such as constitute our Faith the same compounded and exalted virtue.

The truths of our religion are the same sublime and unfathomable mysteries, to be firmly embraced on the sole authority of the word of God : and the evidences of that word to us are distant and indirect. The road to

^m Heb. ii. 1,

these evidences is lengthened and laborious, where numerous difficulties and obstructions are thrown across, to give exertion to the moral, as well as to the intellectual, powers; that the student may improve in virtue as he improves in knowledge. In this laborious search, his industry is excited, his desires kindled, his love promoted. Whether we view him travelling through the annals of civil and ecclesiastical history, to prove the authenticity of the sacred code; whether we regard him as employed in the painful task of comparing ancient manuscripts, copies, editions, and translations, for the purpose of establishing an uncorrupted text; whether he be engaged in collecting the evidences of christianity in order to deduce the immortal argument from the whole; or whether he be interpreting or translating different parts of the holy scriptures: we behold him traversing these regions of various learning with a breast throbbing with desire, and with a hope full of immortality. However deep his erudition and indefatigable his industry, his attention and perseverance will prove unequal to the task, unless animated by the cause which leads him on.

Thus

Thus disciplined in virtue, whilst he advances in knowledge, and encouraged by the example of those pious men, who, in every age, have trod the same learned and laborious walk, and are gone before him to receive the wages of their virtue, the same hopes by which they were animated enable him to persevere: and, whilst he looks up to them with gratitude and veneration for their useful labours, he will attribute their success as much to the goodness of their heart, as to the strength of their understanding.

But the great glory of our Faith is, that, if we turn our eye from the theological student to the humble believer, who, employed in any of the honest occupations of civil life, reads his bible, or hears it read, who “thinks of the Lord with a good heart, and in simplicity of heart seeks him, he will be found of him that tempts him not, and sheweth himself to such as do not distrust him.” It is the peculiar glory of our Faith, that it is made for all men, accommodated to the use, and intended for the benefit, of every class and description in civil life; that he, who breathes

* Wisdom i. 1, 2.

with

with a virtuous desire after the prize of his christian calling, however ignorant and uninformed his head may be, if his heart be good, will be accepted “ according to what he
 “ hath, and not according to what he hath
 “ not.”

Since the inhabitants of every age and nation could not possibly enjoy the evidence of eye-witnesses, let it be our glory to rest our Faith with firmness on the testimony of those who did; in the sanguine hope, that the greater piety, assiduity, and confidence, we exert in the exercise of our religion, the more abundant will be our reward. “ Thomas,
 “ because thou hast seen me, thou hast be-
 “ lieved: blessed are they that have not seen,
 “ and yet have believed.” When those unhappy numbers, who beheld the miracles of Jesus, rejected his doctrines, and ascribed his works to Beelzebub; whilst we, in these distant ages, repose our Faith with confidence on the testimony of others: at a future day, this will, doubtless, redound to their misfortune and to our advantage. “ We are kept
 “ by the power of God, through this faith,

* 2 Cor. viii. 12.

* John xx. 29.

“ unto

“ unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the
 “ last time. Wherein we greatly rejoice
 “ that the trial of our faith, being much more
 “ precious than of gold which perisheth
 “ though it be tried with fire, may be found
 “ unto praise, honour, and glory, at the ap-
 “ pearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not
 “ seen, we love, in whom, though now we
 “ see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with
 “ joy unspeakable, and full of glory; receiv-
 “ ing the end of our faith, the salvation of
 “ our souls.”

In every age of the world the Christian Religion is a school of moral discipline, in which “ the wicked will do wickedly. None
 “ of the wicked shall understand; but the
 “ wise shall understand.” Had its truths and evidences been made to shine upon the understanding with that full glare of light and palpable conviction, which some have ignorantly required; they would have forced from the wicked his hard and unbelieving heart, and rendered it possible to be a christian against the prerogative of his will, in total subversion both of the end of religion and the nature of

1 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8.

1 Dan. xii. 10.

man.

man. He who “ knows whereof we are “ made,” hath dealt with his moral agents in a way more suitable to our condition, and to the honour of his own government, by affording us such a degree of light, as, whilst it gives exercise to our liberty and virtue, is fully sufficient to convince the willing and well-disposed: but which does not shine with such powerful and irresistible force, as to convince those, who “ love darkness rather than “ light, because their deeds are evil ”,”

THUS, from the nature of THEOLOGICAL TRUTH, it becomes the privilege of Faith to be the greatest of virtues, comprehending all moral and intellectual good, and forming that exalted union in which all the virtues of the Heart and Understanding join in one. It is that inviolable bond, in which TRUTH and CHARITY meet together in that WISDOM^{*} which is only from above; which is first pure, subduing the affections, and then perfect, excelling all other knowledge: and this FAITH, by which, in every age, she is to be “ justified of her children ”,” however varied in

* John. iii. 19.

* See first volume, chap. i.

* Matt. xi. 19.

its object by circumstance and situation, is the same quality in all men, more the voluntary dictate of the heart, than the necessary result of the understanding.

So pure in her origin, so progressive in her increase, and so perfect in her end, let it reflect no dishonour on this Wisdom that she can be justified only of her children, nor discredit on that Faith by which this celestial virtue is entertained, that the names of some men of brilliant parts and superior endowments are not enrolled under its banners. It is not, that they reject and dishonour her : it is, that she rejects and dishonours them. Either a cold and evil spirit of unbelief hath chilled the heart ; or the stomach is so vitiated and depraved, that it turns the most wholesome food into deadly poison. Whilst we admire their talents and emulate their learning, to these splendid monuments of human folly let us look up with pity, as our Lord did with tears to the temple of Jerusalem, that superb edifice erected for the service of the living God, and once worthy of his abode ; but which was
then

then defecrated and prophaned, and destined soon to be destroyed.

You deist, you free-thinker, you minute philosopher, you unbeliever of whatever name, however inveterate the prejudices or abandoned the habits with which you labour, we can trust you with this important question, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Which of you can impeach the morality of the Gospel? One advantage you must allow us to enjoy over you in the great utility of its precepts and examples, which contribute so much to the happiness and enjoyment of civil life. And to this advantage resulting from the "Charity" of the gospel, which, we know, "will never fail," we will join another of equal or superior moment to our happiness, derived from the "Hope" we have in believing, which throws a beam of perpetual comfort over the mind, which cheers and enlivens every scene of life; although our faith should be a dream, from which, when we pass into the sleep of death, we are never to awake. For this virtuous, this happy dream, which softens all our cares, alleviates all our pains, animates all our joys, whilst we

are passing through this vale of tears and sorrows, permit us to look up to the divine founder of that faith, with affections of gratitude and love. Such a founder you do not allow. Suffer us, then, to offer them up to God and to his Providence for so great a blessing. But some of you deny that God, and more of you his Providence, convinced that if you admit of them, they will too powerfully imply the rest. If you will, then, take from us every real source of trust and comfort, allow us to look up to heaven and to thank our stars, for the many and great advantages, even in this deplorable state of things, which, by embracing the Gospel, we enjoy above you. But consider, seriously consider, if what you so much deride, should eventually prove no dream, how superabundant then will be our joy and consolation! and how dismal will be your mortification and condemnation!

But “ thanks be to God who hath given “ us” not only the advantage, but “ the “ victory,” over you and the world, even the victory of our “ Faith,” “ through our “ Lord Jesus Christ;” which is, indeed, no dream,

dream, but a virtuous, a pious, and a reasonable conviction, built on substantial grounds, and to be crowned with sure enjoyment. The truths which it embraces are so divinely authorised; the evidences by which they are attested are so well authenticated; they are accompanied by so many concurrent circumstances and credible qualifications, the personal knowledge, the honesty, the number, the consistency, of the witnesses, men who had neither interest nor ability to forge such a great and interesting falsehood, in the very scene, and almost at the time of action, when all men had the immediate power to disprove it; they are transmitted through so many different and opposite channels, and come attested by so many collateral authorities, as to raise in every mind that is rational and truly candid, a conviction, though not so palpable, yet as indubitable, as the strongest evidence: insomuch “ that, if the Gospel be hid, it is
 “ hid from them that are lost; in whom the
 “ God of this world hath blinded the minds
 “ of them that believe not, lest the light of
 “ the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine
 “ unto them.”

2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

The

The prejudice of habit, the pride of science, or the impertinence of curiosity, may make some men dissatisfied, unless they can climb up to the confines of demonstration, for the proof of every question. We esteem it, on the contrary, not only the privilege, but the honour, of every fair and rational enquirer, willingly to embrace and thankfully to acquiesce in such evidence and grounds of assent, as are *sufficient*; more particularly in such, as are *naturally adapted* to the kind of truth in question; and most especially in such, as are accommodated *to the nature* of the subject*. Better and fairer can in no case be required: and with such the Christian Religion is abundantly supplied. God hath revealed himself as he thought best for his own glory and our good; and, if ye cannot believe him, because he has not given you exactly that degree of light, which your own wayward fancy may require, but of which things do not admit, "he will not be mocked," ye must take the blame upon yourselves: and all the assistance which we can give you, is to pray, that "He who commanded the light

* See Hurd's Serm. Vol. vi.

274 *The Chart and Scale*

“ to shine out of darkness, may shine in your
“ hearts, to give you the light of the know-
“ ledge of the glory of God, in the face of
“ Jesus Christ ^x.”

“ The kingdom of God is within you ^y,”
was the answer of our Lord to the interrogat-
ing Jews, implying that it has its origin in
the heart. To represent this fundamental
truth to the full view of his disciples, “ Jesus
“ took a child and set him in the midst, and
“ said, unless ye be converted and become as
“ little children, ye shall not enter into the
“ kingdom of heaven.” And, to illustrate it
still farther, he employs the two parables of
the *seed*^z, and the *seed of mustard*^a. By the
former he signifies, that at first it is small, and
that its increase will depend upon the good-
ness of the soil, which is to be prepared and
cleansed from the weeds of vice, and that, in
such a soil, it will make gradual advances from
one stage to another, producing, “ first, the
“ blade, next the stem, then the ear, and,
“ lastly, the full corn in the ear ^b.” And, by

^x 2 Cor. iv. 6. ^y Luke xvii. 21. ^z Matt. xiii. 3. &c.

^a Matt. xiii. 31. ^b Mark iv. 28.

the

the latter he signifies, that, however small at first, it will become at last the great and reigning principle of the human mind. Thus “ the path of the just,” in the courts and offices of religion, “ is as a shining light, “ which,” by a perpetual increase of faith, and by a perpetual supply of virtue, “ shineth “ more and more unto the perfect day.”

For the admission; as well as for the fruition, of the truths of a religion which is pure and undefiled, the requisite qualification is that of purity and renovation of heart, expressed in scripture by the figure of being *born again* or *from above*: Accordingly the great Apostle of the Gentiles admonishes the Ephesians “ to “ put on the new man, which after God is “ created in righteousness and true holiness^d,” and his Roman converts, “ not “ to be conformed to this world, but to be “ transformed in the renewing of their mind. “ that they may be able to prove what is the “ good and acceptable and perfect work of “ God.”

In consecrating his labours at the temple of religion, whilst he cultivates Truth with his

^c Prov. iv. 18.

^d Eph. iv. 24.

^e Rom. xii. 2.

Understanding, let the child of Wisdom nourish Charity in his heart, as the first and most essential ingredient of a sound and saving Faith; awfully reflecting on the predictive admonition of the last great prophet—"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: he that is holy, let him be holy still."

FROM this logical view of the province of THEOLOGY, in its *Principle*, in its *Reasoning*, and in its *Truth*, the student in Divinity will entertain an awful sense of the dignity, as well as of the difficulty, of that science, which leaves behind all terrestrial things, and opens his prospect into future and disembodied scenes. With the humility, which becomes his present state, he will feel himself to be only in the infancy of his existence, and that his knowledge is proportioned to the immaturity of his age. In respect of the manhood of his being, he only thinks and understands as a child; and, in this school of terrestrial discipline in which he is training

' Rev. xxii. 11.

for

for immortality, “ he walks by faith and not “ by sight.” He will acknowledge, that this life does not admit of any adequate view of things, and that even the eye of faith, by which they are spiritually discerned, can only “ see them imperfectly and in part, and as “ through a glass darkly.” He will be convinced, that there are innumerable and ineffable truths reposed in this divine, out of the present comprehension of the human mind : from whence will spring a lively hope, that, in the future periods of his existence, he may be admitted to their knowledge and enjoyment ; when, divested of this mortal body, and removed from this material system, he will be transplanted into a purer climate under the influence of a brighter sun, and advance by perpetual approaches toward HIM, who is now “ enshrined in clouds and darkness,” but who will then present himself, “ to be seen even “ as he himself is seen ;” “ when he will “ behold his presence in righteousness, and “ awaking after his likeness, he will be satisfied with it.”

* Ps. xvii. 15.

C H A P. IV.General RECAPITULATION, and PROSPECTUS
of the future Plan.

I AM in the situation of one, who has been travelling over a flat but fertile country. When he first set out, the place of his destination appeared at no great distance; and the objects to be noticed in the way seemed neither so many nor so important, but that he could view them with sufficient attention for the purpose of his journey, and arrive at the end in a given time. As he advanced, he found the way lengthening every mile, the objects increasing in number and swelling in magnitude as the eye approached them; inso-much that, though he made no excursion out of the road, he found himself employed and detained upon it more than twice as long as he

he expected. Thus the plan, which I hoped to execute, in some measure, in a course of ten or twelve lectures, is not half finished: and, though I have endeavoured to treat the important topics of various disquisition as they occurred, with all the conciseness in my power, I am only arrived at the point from which I intended to take my general scope.

This may, I fear, be a tax upon the future patience of my auditors; and it is, I am sure, a present disappointment to myself. But, before I start again, if I should find opportunity and encouragement to go on, and can overcome that indolence which is a vice I feel too deeply rooted in my constitution, it may be proper to take a general view of the ground over which I have come, by way of settling accounts as I go along, and also to give my reader a short sketch of the country, through which I may be tempted, perhaps, at future periods, to lead him: unless some one else better qualified than myself should undertake the task; *‘et gaudebo certe, si alii, quod nos inchoavimus, melioribus ipsi auspiciis et necessariis ad tantum opus præfidiis instructiores perfecerint’*.

^a Caufabon, p. 406.

WISDOM, with which I commenced these philosophical researches, is that universal virtue both of the *Heart* and *Understanding*, which comprehends all *moral* and *intellectual* good; and which is accordingly divided into two collateral branches, *Truth* and *Charity*, the foundation and consummation of all things.—TRUTH is of the nature and essence of God, incapable of a verbal definition, but to be illustrated by the similitude of *Light*. From the *divine* Mind, it becomes by communication an attribute of the *human*, and is proportioned to the mind in which it is. In the divine mind it is *universal*, *intuitive*, *equal*, and *infallible*: in the human, it is *partial*, *progressive*, *various*, and *hidden*, to be sought by a virtuous and assiduous investigation: in both, it is *immutable*^b.

In the investigation of Truth, the PHILOSOPHY OF MIND, of which it is an attribute, is the *first* in natural order, though the *last* in the course of human study, and, therefore, called METAPHYSIC; a science which, in its just and proper cultivation, is of great importance, as it lays the philosophical foundation and distinction of all other sciences; dis-

^b Chap. i. of first volume.

tributing

tributing the human mind into three general provinces, the *theoretic*, the *practic*, and the *poetic*, or the *Intellect*, the *Will*, and the *Imagination*; and classing Truth in general under these different provinces, as it divides into *special* relations, according to the operation of these different faculties on their respective internal and external objects^c.

All truth, to whichever province it belong, is deduced from PRINCIPLES as they exist in the nature and constitution of things, which are of two general kinds, *Primary* and *Secondary*: the *Primary* are the *Evidence of External Sense*, the *Evidence of Internal Sense*, and the *Evidence of Memory*, &c.: the *Secondary* are *Axioms* or *Universal Propositions*, derived from the former by a process of reason. These two sorts of Principles divide all direct Reasoning into two kinds or methods^d.

Truths are deduced from Principles by an act of REASON, their common instrument, consisting of Perception and Judgment, and acting by Comparison; whose office is to judge of *Evidences*, to form and apply *Axioms*, and to trace *Similitudes*—According to the Prin-

^c Chap. ii. of first volume.

^d Chap. iii. of *ibid*.

ciples on which it operates, Reasoning is divided into different *Methods*—The first is the *Inductive*, which encounters with *particulars* from the primary Principles, comparing many of them together by simple acts, and extracting *general laws* respecting the powers, properties, and relations, of things; and abstracting, by an experimental process, *general ideas* or *formal causes*. By affirming or denying a genus of a species, or an accident of a substance, through all the stages of the ascending process, it forms general conclusions, which, if logically conducted, are *axioms* ranged one above another, till they terminate in *universals*—When axioms or secondary principles are thus formed, the Method is the reverse, and becomes *Syllogistic*, which applies these general axioms to the proof of less general or particular truths; predicating a genus of a species or individual, in a descending process; and proceeding by double or complex comparisons, by the help of a third or middle term.—To these two, which are direct, is added the *Analogic*, which is indirect and subservient to them. This compares things already known, by whatever way, with those which
are

are not known, and, from their similitude, concludes of the truth of the latter; which is a Method of vast utility and extent, and supplemental to both the former. These three Methods are totally *different*, and constitute the whole business of LOGIC as an instrumental art^e.

Truth in general takes a *special* form, according to the special nature of its different *Means*, which are all those various substances and subjects of Mind and Body, from which its *particular principles* are supplied. According to these particular Principles, and the method of Reasoning adapted to them, Truth divides into particular KINDS, possessed of different degrees of evidence and conviction: and the general RULE, by which Reason conducts its operations in each, is, To investigate its *proper Principles*, to pursue them in the *proper Method*, and to entertain its *proper Truth* with a just and due assent^f.

In applying this general Rule to the different Kinds of learning, the first part of my PLAN, executed in these two volumes, consists; which, by exhibiting a *Parallel* of their Prin-

^a Chap. iv. of first volume.

^f Chap. v. of *ibid*.

ciples,

284 *The Chart and Scale*

ciples, their *Reasoning*, and their *Truths*, forms a general CHART of their distinct and separate provinces, and their subdivisions; and, by placing them in juxtaposition and a comparative point of view, furnishes a general SCALE, by which the proper nature and weight of the TRUTH of each may be adjusted[‡].

Every thing that is the subject of human knowledge, belongs either to *Mind* or *Body*. Metaphysic is the universal science, Logic the universal art, which treat more immediately of the former: Physics of the latter. Between them lies a science which relates to and partakes of both, having its subject derived from the sensible qualities of *body*, but abstracted by an act of *mind*; which is MATHEMATICS, confined to *Quantity* continuous and discrete, or *Magnitude* and *Multitude*, and accordingly dividing into *Geometry* and *Arithmetic*—The *Evidence of the external Senses* exercised upon bodies in respect to quantity, from which all other attributes are abstracted with so much ease as to supersede the necessity of induction, is the primary principle of Mathematical science; which begins with *general ideas*,

‡ Chap. vi. of first volume.

capable

capable of a clear and adequate *definition*, of being exhibited to the eye by *diagrams* and *signs*, being *simple modes* distinct from all other ideas, *absolute* and *unchangeable* in themselves, and exactly *measured* and ascertained. These ideas being compared, form a few general propositions which are Axioms or *secondary Principles*, which compel conviction from a single act of judgment, and are, therefore, *self-evident*, but not *intuitive*—From these axioms Mathematical Reasoning is perfectly *Syllogistic*, reducing *general Truths* under *more general* till they terminate in the *most general*; which conclusions or demonstrated theorems to be applied, in the same way, to the proof of others almost ad infinitum—The *Truths* resulting from such a process are purely *scientific*, carrying the most *absolute* and *irresistible conviction*^b.

The science of PHYSICS or NATURAL PHILOSOPHY investigates the *Qualities* of individual and particular things, the properties and operations of natural body—The *Evidence of the External Senses* is the *primary Principle* of Physics, assisted by *experiments* and philoso-

^b Chap. vii. of first volume.

phical

phical *observations*—The method of *Reasoning*, from a number of these experiments and observations to general causes or secondary principles, is purely and exclusively *Inductive* extended by *Analogy*. When these secondary principles or laws of *Physic* have been thus established, they will account for the truth of particulars by *Superinduction* only without the help of *Syllogism*: but *Mathematics* apply with great effect to those physical forms, which are capable of mensuration—As experiments do not penetrate into the essences of things, but only inform the senses of apparent qualities or effects, as the induction is partial and confined, and the conclusions particular only, *Physical Truth* is inferior to mathematical, and, however certain, *not absolutely necessary*. *Physics* are, however, a most useful and interesting part of science¹.

FACTS form an extensive and important species of truth—Their *first* and *sole Principle* is the evidence of the *External Senses*, requiring to their proof the coincidence of a particular transaction, person, time, and place—

¹ Chap. viii. of first volume.

Being

Being themselves as first principles resulting directly from the senses, they require no direct reasoning, either inductive or syllogistic—But *Reason* is employed in examining the *Senses* by comparing them with themselves in order to know, whether they be sound and well-informed, subject to no impediment from nature, imposition from art, or fallacy from accident.—The *Truth* which results is immediate and irresistible, both *self-evident* and *intuitive* ^k.

Facts are enlarged, and extended to distant times and places by HISTORY—The *first Principle* of historical knowledge is the faculty of *Memory*, supported by that universal affection the *Love of truth*, operating together and producing the *secondary Principle* of *Testimony*—The *method of Reasoning* is first *inductive*, from the primary principle, exercised in innumerable particular instances, to the general truth of the secondary: *Testimony* is, however, different from other general principles, and the *reasoning* from it very different. It is not, like them, the cause of truth, it is only the medium by which truths derived from other causes are conveyed, producing

^k Chap. ix. of first volume.

different degrees of conviction according to the different circumstances, persons, times, and places, with which it is connected, and requiring to be particularly investigated, through the competency of witnesses, the fidelity of relators, the authenticity of records, and collateral vouchers—*Historical Truth* is only *secondary* and *indirect*, varying in its strength with these circumstances, the fidelity of the investigation, and the clearness or obscurity of the media by which it comes, through all the *degrees of probability*¹.

All these kinds of truth belong to the province of the UNDERSTANDING.

The practic functions are in the province of the WILL, and relate to MORAL ACTION, the end of which is *Happiness*—The *primary Principle* of Morality is *Internal* or *Moral Sense*, an instinct of our common nature, informing us of *Good* and *Evil*, of the existence of the *Will*, by which men choose the one and avoid the other, and of *Reward* attaching on the performance of the one, and *Punishment* of the other: from whence are inferred a superior Law and moral Government, the

¹ Chap. x. of first volume.

foundation

foundation of moral obligation fixed in the attributes and will of God—From the operation of these primary principles, in innumerable particulars, *Reason* derives, by a kind of tacit *induction*, two universal propositions as secondary principles,

All voluntary good will have reward :

All voluntary evil will have punishment.

But, as morality consists of particular actions which are innumerable, arising from various relations, the chief office of *ethical reasoning* is, to range these by *induction* into classes called Virtues and Vices, Sins and Duties, with their appropriate attributes ; and so to form less general propositions as *middle principles*, under which particular actions are to be referred by *sylogism*—The *truths* so deduced are *Ethical*, which, however *clear* and *strong* in their conviction, are very different and *inferior* to mathematical demonstrations. The most perfect ethics is the morality of the Gospel^m.

POETRY belongs to the IMAGINATION, and is employed by *Imitation* in producing some

^m Chap. xi. of first volume.

VOL. II.

U

Effect.

Effect. It consists of the *Elegant Arts*, whose end is *Pleasure with Instruction*, and whose excellence depends on their correspondence to truth, under the conduct of reason—The *first Principle* of poetical or imitative art, is a *native and internal Sensibility* recognizing the objects and events which produce the different modes of pleasure and pain—Of these different effects often experienced *Reason* first investigates the proper *causes*, which it then ranks, by *induction*, into general classes as poetical ideas or secondary principles, from whence the poet draws the resources of his art, which he applies in all the different acts of Imitation, to produce the poetical effect.—If these generals be well formed and judiciously applied, if the imitation be true, and the resemblance which it exhibits just, the *effect* produced upon the mind will be *uniform and certain*, which constitutes *poetic Truth*, operating on the sensibility of all, according to its powersⁿ.

—Music is also an imitative art, though complicated and involved in mystery, which de-

ⁿ Chap. xii. of first volume.

serves to be particularly analyzed and critically ascertained^{*}.

In the conclusion of the first volume, I have offered some strictures on the ARISTOTELIAN LOGIC, in order to trace its origin, and to estimate its worth^p: and also on the DISCIPLINE OF THE SCHOOLS, with a cordial view to its improvement^q.

THEOLOGY is a science more different from all the preceding, than any of them are from each other, not taking its origin, like them, from any *material subject* or from the *mind of man*, but from another and much higher source, the *mind of God*, in which all the provinces of INTELLECT, WILL, and IMAGINATION, are concerned. Its Logic will, however, derive important elucidation from a comparison with them.

The Théological PRINCIPLE, is, accordingly, totally different from and infinitely superior to every other, being the TESTIMONY or WORD OF GOD, conveyed to men by a supernatural mode of communication called *Reve-*

* Chap. xiii. of first volume.

^p Chap. xiv. *ibid*,

^q Chap. xv. *ibid*.

lation. The nature of this Divine Testimony is somewhat similar to human Testimony, from which *similarity* it takes possession of the human mind: but, when the possession is secured, it is not only *universal* in its operation, but so much *superior* to all other principles, and so *transcendent* in its power, that it rejects all reasoning, both in deducing its truths, and in properly deciding upon them. They result of themselves from its divine authority and produce an *effect* in proportion to the principle, which is the strongest and most implicit assent of the mind distinguished by the name of *Faith*. These Truths are *Mysteries*, different from all other kinds, to be thought upon with reverence, and embraced with confidence.

But, though REASON may have no proper or direct concern with the Principle or the Mysteries of Revelation, its office in THEOLOGY is various and important; which is to enquire, Whether such a Revelation, containing such a Principle, with its Mysteries and Credentials, was actually given by God, and received by men.

Chap. i. of second volume.

The

The GROUNDS of Reasoning in Divinity are, therefore, the various *Means* by which the Gospel, which contains this Principle or Word of God, was confirmed, is conveyed to us, and is to be understood by us: and the METHOD it pursues, is, 1st, By estimating the *Morality* or *Internal Evidence* of the Gospel. 2dly, In judging of that part of its *External Evidence* called *Miracles*. 3dly, In the study of *Prophecy*, that other part of *External Evidence*. And, as both the time and place of this Revelation are far removed from ours, Reason has to enquire, by an historical investigation, Whether the *Witnesses* of such Evidences were *well-informed* and *faithful*, whether the *written record*, in which the whole is contained, was aided by *inspiration*, and whether the *bible* which we have be a true and *authentic transcript* of the original*.

In the study of the HOLY SCRIPTURES, so confirmed and authenticated, Reasoning is an act of *Interpretation*: and the *right* and *true Method* of interpreting the Volume of Grace is analogous and similar to that which

* Chap. ii. sect. 1. of second volume.

has, of late years, been adopted by the best natural philosophers in interpreting the Volume of Nature: not by hypothesis, factitious system, and disputation, but from *grounds* and *documents* contained in scripture^r.

In the GENERAL INTERPRETATION of the Holy Scriptures, the first object of the student's attention are the *Learned Languages*, in which they were originally written or early translated: the second is the *Analogical Style*, and the third, the *Parabolical Style*, of the sacred writings in all its variety and extent^u.

In the PARTICULAR INTERPRETATION or TRANSLATION of the Holy Scriptures, the first object is, by an able and accurate collation, to procure a *genuine Copy*; and the next, to render it in another language according to the Rules of *Impartiality*, *Propriety*, *Perspicuity*, and *Uniformity*, which the particular nature of inspired and divine productions warrants and requires.

The TRUTH resulting from this various and extensive train of Reasoning in regard to the Evidences, the Authority, the Authen-

^r Chap. ii. sect. 2. of second volume.

^u Chap. ii. sect. 3. of *ibid.*

ticity,

ticity, the Interpretation, and Translation of the Holy Scriptures, is THEOLOGICAL, totally different from every other kind, and requiring a different assent, and though superior in value, *inferior* in force, from which logical inferiority, *Faith* by which it is embraced and entertained by the inhabitants of every age, the Patriarch of old, the Eye-witness, and the modern Believer, is the greatest of virtues, engaging all the best affections of the Heart as well as the faculties of the Understanding, and constituting that pure and perfect WISDOM in which *Truth* and *Charity* are united, with which these lectures commenced, and with which they end*, as being, in the language of our great philosopher, 'the port and sabbath of all human contemplations'.

In this general CHART or Geography of TRUTH, I have attempted to give a *Parallel and Comparative View* of the different *Kinds*

* Chap. iii. of second volume.

† Cum sit portus et sabbatum humanarum contemplationum omnium, Baconus de Augm. Sc. lib. iii. cap. i.

of learning human and divine, classing and arranging them under separate provinces, and analyzing them according to their respective nature and constitution: so that, whilst all may be seen at one view in their relative situation, each, in its proper cultivation, may be kept distinct; its own Principles asserted; its own Proofs employed*; and the conviction

* Superest artis judicandi appendix quædam insignis, quam desiderari statuimus: Siquidem Aristoteles rem notavit, modum rei nullibi persecutus est. Ea tractat, quales demonstrationes ad quales materias sive subjecta applicari debeant; ut hæc doctrina tanquam judicationes judicationum contineat. Optime enim Aristoteles, Neque enim demonstrationes ab oratoribus, neque suasiones a mathematicis requiri debere monet: Ut, si in probationis genere aberretur, judicatio ipsa non absolvatur. Quando vero sunt quatuor demonstrationum genera, vel per consensum immediatum & notiones communes, vel per inductionem, vel per syllogismum, vel per eam (quam recte vocat Aristoteles) demonstrationem in orbem, (non a notioribus scilicet sed tanquam de plano,) habent hæc demonstrationes singulæ certa subjecta & materias scientiarum in quibus pollent; alia, a quibus excluduntur. Etenim rigor & curiositas in poscendo probationes nimium severas in aliquibus, multo magis facilitas & remissio in acquiescendo probationibus levioribus in aliis, inter ea sunt numeranda, quæ detrimenti plurimum scientiis attulerunt, Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. v. cap. 4.

of

of its Truths measured and ascertained by a mutual SCALE. This appeared, in my mind, to be the just and philosophical method to keep the understanding clear and steady in its researches, to render it successful in its investigations, sensible of its own weakness, and thankfully acquiescent in every kind of Truth, particularly in that which is the subject of THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, TO GROUND AND ESTABLISH which, upon a broad and solid basis, is the principle object of these lectures.

This various and extensive task I have executed in a treatise of more than sufficient length, if we consider the number and value of its pages; but much too short, I fear, if we consider the extent and importance of the subject. It was not, however, in my intention to descend to a full discussion of the several branches of learning; but only to take a general and cursory view of each: in which I do not presume to teach others in the style of one that dictates, but to invite them to study for themselves, in the language of a friend and fellow-labourer. And, though I should not have leisure or ability to execute the other parts of my projected plan, this will
not

not be thought imperfect on that account, as it embraces the first object I had in view as entirely and independently, as if I was to execute the whole design.

The future purposes to which this general Chart will be preparatory, after putting Theology upon its distinct and proper bottom, will be more fully to CONFIRM THE CHRISTIAN FAITH; and also to develop the CAUSES OF HERETICAL AND SCHISMATICAL ERRORS, by which it is opposed.

To these purposes nothing can so effectually contribute as extensive views, which break all narrow habits of thinking, and set the mind at liberty, which enable it to embrace the most distant and dissimilar parts of learning, and which give it a command over the general expanse of knowledge, as the eye elevated upon a rock has over the whole country below, which can see the bearings and connections of every part, can allow to each its proper latitude and extent, and contemplate the whole scene without mixture of confusion.

The

The second part of my plan will be, if I should be tempted to pursue it, to apply those parts of human learning, which have been analyzed and digested in the first volume, to Theology: in order to discover exactly how far, when cultivated according to the *Rule of Reason*, they contribute to its introduction and support, and where their application ought to terminate; which will give us a comprehensive view of the RIGHT USE OF LEARNING*. In the execution of this part we shall observe the several branches as they spring out of the general tree of knowledge; we shall distinguish their affinities, connections, and dependences; and we shall see how one kind of Truth is built upon another, and how far those which are human minister, in their subordinate and proper exercise, to those that are divine.

And the third part will very conveniently run along with the second: for, by turning our attention from this right use of Learning, in which these different branches are thus

* See p. 76 of the first volume.

logically

logically contributing to Theology, to the ABUSE² of it, in which the *Rule of Reason* is neglected or infringed, and they are illogically confounded and mixed together, we shall be able to discover the true and adequate *Causes* of those Heretical and Schismatical Errors, which only want to be discovered to be eradicated.

The execution of this part, which forms the completion of the plan laid down, if attended with that success, of which an author may be permitted to indulge a hope, promises to be an effectual support of sacred truth, by a radical subversion of its opponents; at the same time that it is calculated to reward his labour by conferring a high gratification upon his mind, through every stage of the investigation. ‘*Suave est spectaculum, stantem aut
 * ambulantem in littore, navem intueri tem-
 * pestate in mare jactatam; suave itidem ex
 * editâ arce duas cernere acies concurrentes in
 * planitie: at nil dulcius est homini, quam
 * mens per doctrinam in arce veritatis collo-
 * cata, unde aliorum errores & labores dis-
 * picere possit.*’

² See p. 77 of the first volume.

³ Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. i.

All Falsehood is opposite to Truth. Error is that Falsehood, which, availing itself of the weakness of the Understanding, the depravity of the Will, or the undue influence of the Imagination, assumes the colour of Truth, by which Reason is deceived. Truth is the health, Error the disorder, of the mind: the one leading to honour and happiness; the other to disgrace and misery.

The human Body is a machine or system consisting of many different parts and operations: the Mind is also a machine or system consisting of similar parts and operations; and, though their union be mysterious, their analogy is conspicuous. The health of both consists alike of a due and regular discharge of their respective parts and operations; and the disorder of both springs respectively from their suspension or irregularity. To cure the disorders of the Body is the duty of the physician, and to cure those of the Mind is the duty of the philosopher. But, before either can apply his remedy, he must find out the Cause; for the maxim, '*Sublatâ causâ tollitur effectus,*' holds as good in philosophy as in medicine, and has there, indeed, a more full
and

and effectual operation: for, after the physician has found the cause, he has to invent and to apply his medicines without a certainty of success in the event; whereas, in philosophy divine or human, the invention of the cause, will, in generous minds at least, be itself the cure.

To enable him to investigate a disorder, the physician is acquainted with the anatomy of the human Body, has studied its œconomy and analyzed its functions, and in their obstruction or irregularity he remarks those symptoms which discover to him the cause. By a similar analysis of the Mind, and an acquaintance with its faculties and operations, and by knowing the proper exercise of reason in every department of knowledge, either in its *Suspension* or in its *Misapplication*, the philosopher is enabled to discover the different *Causes* of Error.

The *first general Cause* springs from a total neglect or *Suspension* of Reason, in consequence of which, men embrace falsehood for truth with an implicit trust, upon the bare credit and blind authority of others.

From

From this cause spring all those *Vulgar Errors* cherished from age to age by the blindness of prejudice and the inveteracy of habit; and also *Errors of Superstition* differing from the former only as they obtain in matters of religion, and growing more inveterate in proportion to the greater seriousness and solemnity of the subject, and the universal interest which it involves. Equally the children of ignorance and obstinacy, they embrace as sisters. They have always grown and thriven together in the same soil and climate, under the same civil administration and the same friendly cloud of darkness and prejudice; and are together annihilated and dispelled by the approach of learning wherever it gains admittance, as night is by the approach of day. Under the deadly shade of superstitious errors, perpetuated by the artifice of interested and ambitious men, and thickened by the base and corrupted policy of degenerate states devoted to the god of slavery, the Religion of Asia and the greatest part of Europe has languished for many ages. As knowledge, however, advances, they naturally decline. In the provinces of Europe they have been long
6 upon

upon the wain, and are rapidly hastening to decay. Those of the Jews have been ably refuted^b. Those of the Roman Pontiff, notwithstanding all the gloss and varnish with which they have been disguised, have been sufficiently exposed^c. And those of the false Prophet of Arabia, though under the cloud of Asiatic ignorance more explicitly espoused, are still easier to be refuted^d.

The *second general Cause* of Error springs from a different source, the *Perversion* and *Misapplication* of Reason, more deceitful and difficult to be found and extirpated; which, in all the different shapes that it assumes, will be the subject of my future studies. This is the ABUSE OF LEARNING from the violation of the *Rule of Reason*^d, in all these different ways.—First, by reasoning from *no*

^b Limborch de Veritate Religionis Christianæ amica collatio cum erudito Judæo.

^c Chillingworth's Safe Way to Salvation.

^d Jenkins's Reasonableness of the Christian Religion. Bp. Gibson's Second Pastoral Letter. Grotius De Veritate Christianæ Religionis. Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, and Dr. White's Bampton Lectures.

Principles at all: or, secondly, by reasoning from the Principles of one branch of learning in the Method of another: or, thirdly, by reasoning from the Principles of one to the Truths of another: or, lastly, by expecting the same kind and degree of Conviction in the Truths of one, which belong to another, and of which it does not admit. So that this second general source of Error divides into *four particular Causes*, which, in their separate or joint operation, will account for all Scientific and Theological Errors, however different they may appear to be, according to the acute observation of the great philosopher, ‘ that
 ‘ of opposite errors the causes of erring are
 ‘ commonly the same.’

Springing from a different source these *Learned Errors* have a different effect from those of Ignorance. As these are on the wain, they are on the increase. Strenuously defending themselves in the usurped fortresses of Truth, and jealous of their hold, they support their false claim by all the formalities of reasoning and appearance of conviction, and lead in the chains of sophistry a considerable

* Bacon's Adv. of Learning.

part of the learned world. Assuming various shapes and postures of defence, shifting from ground to ground, and relieving each other with the changes of time and fashion, while the mind is subject to vice and infirmity, they threaten to prevail, and to keep pace with Truth herself. They are the only enemies religion has to dread; for, though its truths will overcome at last, for a time they weaken its force and retard its progress.

The usual method of combating with these Errors is to attack them, with the arms of polemical divinity, as they appear in some stage of their *Effects* equipped in the accoutrements of false reasoning: but the more successful and compendious mode of exterminating them will be to find and expose their *Causes*; which would immediately defeat their consequences in every stage. Instead of leveling bold and efficient strokes at the root of the tree of Error, controversy, however well conducted, is only like beating among the branches; where, if one be cut off, two spring in its place. This method has prevailed, because it is friendly to that polemical contention and that scholastic disputation which de-

light to keep up the ball from age to age, in which many a champion of truth has been defeated by the patron of error, and many a battle drawn. The method which these lectures would adopt and recommend, is, not to combat particular errors under the disguise of truth, by particular arguments, but to investigate and expose their general Cause; under the persuasion, that it will contribute more effectually to their extirpation, than if I were to write volumes of controversy to attack the various forms and appearances of error prepared to deceive and mislead mankind: for, when the tree is cut at the root, all its branches with their poisonous fruit must come down together.

The *general Causes* which I have mentioned, and to which, in their joint or separate operation, all learned errors are to be attributed, originate either in the *Pride* or *Prejudice* of the human mind.

The *first*, which consists in *reasoning from no Principle at all*, however absurd it may appear even to common sense, is of great influence and extent. The powers of the human mind are, doubtless, great; but her *presump-*

tion is sometimes greater^f. Not content to be employed upon such principles and materials as are furnished for her use by Providence and the natural state of things, in a slow and sober exercise, she vainly presumes, by an action and operation of her own, to invent others of a superior order, by the help of which, she can soar with a rapid wing into the possession of the sublimest truths. Buoyed up into the air by these self-inventions, she attempts unbounded flights into the fertile but delusive regions of imagination. In these regions

^f Alius error fuit ex nimia reverentia, & quasi adoratione intellectus humani, unde homines abduxere se a contemplatione naturæ, atque ab experientia, in propriis meditationibus & ingenii commentis susque deque volutantes. Cæterum præclaros hos opinatores & (si ita loqui licet) intellectualistas, qui tamen pro maxime sublimibus & divinis philosophis haberi solent, recte Heraclitus perstrinxit, *Homines, inquit, quærent veritatem in microcosmis suis, non in mundo majori.* Respuunt enim quasi abecedarium naturæ, primumque in operibus divinis tirocinium: quod si non facerent, potuissent fortasse graduatim & sensim, post literas simplices & deinceps syllabas, ad textum & volumen ipsarum creaturarum expedite legendum ascendere. At illi contra, jugi mentis agitatione, urgent & tanquam invocant suos genios, ut vaticinentur eis edantque oracula, quibus merito & suaviter decipiuntur. Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. i.

was

was erected the edifice of Hypothesis, filled with golden dreams and enchanted fictions, with which the pride and self-sufficiency of philosophers make them to be enamoured, and to embrace them for the most valuable truths. From these fictitious principles we see even Aristotle, Plato, and Pythagoras, the ancient, and more particularly the modern, metaphysicians led, by trains of solid reasoning, to the temple of splendid and delusive errors: for when the mind, that complex machine, has its first wheel set wrong, which gives movement to every other, though all the rest go right, the whole will terminate in wrong.

The peculiar nature and mystic sublimity of Theology open a two-fold door for the introduction of this Cause—Either on principles of human invention to erect nominal truths that have no existence—or, to attempt, from such principles, to prove or to disprove truths, which are to be embraced on no other principle than the Testimony of God.

The other which have been assigned as the general Causes of Error, consisting in the

Adoption of wrong Principles, in the Application of a wrong Method of Reasoning, or in the Expectation of a wrong Species of Conviction, have their origin in Prejudice springing from partial and inveterate habits.

Man is altogether a creature of *habit*. All his virtues are habits; all his vices are habits: and habit has a wonderful sway over the mind not only in the elegant, but also in the scientific, parts of learning. As the ear is prepared and qualified by habit for the enjoyment of music, the eye for that of painting, and every other part of the mental and corporeal frame adapted to its proper object: so is the mind prepared and qualified by habit for the search and relish of every kind of truth. But this same habit, which is the friend of all virtue and all knowledge, by being too long and too closely confined to the same objects, employments, and pursuits, as it is observed to contract and even distort the body, so it generates in the mind a prejudice and confirms a partiality, which not only cramp and confine, but often weaken and destroy, its powers.

It

It is the mark of a living writer, who is no ordinary philosopher, that ‘ custom and
 ‘ some other causes have made many deviations from the natural pleasures and pains of
 ‘ the several tastes; but then the power of
 ‘ distinguishing between the natural and the
 ‘ acquired relish remains to the very last.
 ‘ A man,’ says he, ‘ frequently comes to
 ‘ prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar,
 ‘ and the flavour of vinegar to that of milk,
 ‘ but this makes no confusion in tastes, whilst
 ‘ he is sensible that the tobacco and vinegar
 ‘ are not sweet, and whilst he knows that
 ‘ habit alone has reconciled his palate to these
 ‘ alien pleasures.’ Unfortunately, however, for the interests of truth, it is not so well with the mind as with the palate; for when that has been enslaved by long usage to the cultivation of one kind of truth, it not only relishes and prefers it, but becomes often insensible to the distinction and even existence of other kinds.

Thus addicted to one set of Principles, thus habituated to one train of Reasoning,

* Burke’s *Intro.* to *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*.
 See *Aristotle’s Metaph.* Book ii. chap. 3.

and thus accustomed to one sort of Conclusions, men are often disqualified, by the very habit of stating, reasoning, and concluding, and by their very success in some parts of learning, from prosecuting truth in others. Wedded by an intemperate fondness and admiration to their own studies, and, not knowing as they seldom do, much beyond them, they are unwilling to allow that truth can exist in any other way. In every part of science, either their principle must be adopted, or their method of reasoning employed, or their conclusions drawn: and they refuse to be satisfied with any other^b.

When, under the influence of these prejudices and partial habits, philosophers turn their attention from their other studies to

^b Alius error huic posteriori finitissimus est, quod homines sapius imbuant & inficiant meditationes & doctrinas suas opinionibus quibusdam & conceptibus propriis, quos potissimum in admiratione habent, aut artibus, quibus maxime addicti & consecrati sunt; cætera omnia illis deliciis inficientes & quasi intingentes, licet fuco admodum fallaci. Sic sæpe philosophiæ immiscuit Plato theologiam, Aristoteles logicam, secunda schola Platonis (Proclus scilicet & reliqui) mathematicas. Ista enim artes solebant illi tanquam filios suos suaviari. Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. i.

Theology,

Theology, they are either defeated in their attempt to reason at all, or else they reason in a wrong way, or else they are disappointed that its truths do not bring the same conviction they have been accustomed to expect: which will account for a phænomenon much to be deplored, that some of the brightest ornaments of human learning have reasoned themselves out of the sacred temple of light and truth, into the gloomy prison of infidelity.

These I apprehend to be the true CAUSES of the most dangerous and inveterate ERRORS that beset the Christian Faith; and which are the more to be lamented, as they raise enemies to religion in the persons of those, who, from the love of learning, would, by a proper use of it, prove its ablest support. After shewing, therefore, how far those parts of learning which have been analyzed in the preceding volume, minister to religion, I would endeavour to trace these Errors to their proper Causes in the joint or separate operation: which method of combating with error will relieve me from two evils attendant on that other of polemical controversy—*disputation,*

tion, which terminates in logomachy—and *intemperate warmth*, which ends in animosity.

1. Instead of adding to the general stock of learning on the one hand, by drawing from its true and genuine resources, and guarding it from error, on the other, by enquiring into the Causes from which it springs; learned men shut up what they had, or supposed they had, in sciences and systemsⁱ, as the miser does his money in chests and boxes; and then defended them with all the fury of a clamorous disputation. Hence polemical controversy took its rise, in which the combatants and defenders of systems took the field, each equipped in his own private armour, which he employed in his own partial way; and the whole merit of the contest consisted in lengthening out the disputation by univocating, equivocating, and defining, by terms divorced from things, and propositions without a meaning. The same questions, which had been agitated for ages, were left undetermined:

Alius error est præmatura atque protèrva reductio doctrinarum in artes & methodos; quod cum fit, plerumque scientia aut parum aut nihil proficit.

Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. i.

and

and the fields, which were neither lost nor won, were always ready to be fought again.

Of the three expedients proposed by its great reformer to remove the difficulties of learning, the most important, he observes, is that ‘*wisdom of design*, which strikes out the right way to accomplish what we want: that prudent choice of the means to be employed, which conduces more effectually to the end in view, than the application and accumulation of the greatest force^k.’ If the plan, which I have laid down for the invention of different kinds of Truth, be found and philosophical, it will point out that which is to be pursued in the detection of Error, which is its opposite: for as the way to the one is in a right line exactly prescribed, every deviation from that will lead to the other; and we have only to mark with care that particular *cause* or obstacle, which interferes to throw reason out of the direct, into the oblique,

* Inter hæc tria merito primas tenet *Consilii prudentia & sanitas*; hoc est monstratio & delineatio viæ rectæ & proclivis, ad rem, quæ proponitur, peragendam—*medii prudens electio* efficacius conducit ad rem, quam virium aut intentio aut accumulatio. Baconus De Augm. Sc. lib. ii. cap. i.

road. And by shunning the *Cause* we shall avoid the error.

This is to detect error by the light of truth immediately applied ; which would bring all reasoning, which has been so various and so clamorous, to a certain and silent issue, by prescribing a general and standing law, ‘ That the matter in question be referred to its proper province, that the combatants come out of their private ground, and meet it on its own *principles*, and none else ; that they leave their prejudices and habits, which are their private armour, behind, and argue in the *method* which is its own, and in no other ; and that they go hand in hand in the philosophical, not disputatious, search of Truth and Error, obliging themselves to embrace the one, and to discard the other, *what or where-ever they may be.*’

2. As to the other evil incident to controversy, if the temper of the theological reasoner were ever so irritable, the method here proposed would relieve him from the effects of an unbecoming warmth. It can trace Errors to some of the causes which have been assigned, without charging them indiscriminately

nately on vice; and, in the fair pursuit of its object, it can allow their patrons all the merit they possess and forgive their faults, convinced of the validity of this axiom, that Truth is never so graceful and successful as when led by the hand by Charity.

The spirit of this Wisdom, we are told, “is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and “easy to be entreated, full of mercy and “good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy¹,” and of so lovely a portrait, it becomes her children, in the act of justifying her, not to injure or distort the features. Why should intemperate heat be suffered to take place of sober argument? Why should candour be supplanted by illiberality, and benevolence by scorn? By the favour of providence and the liberality of kings, the Christian Church has ample endowments, if properly bestowed, for the support of advocates who are able and willing to maintain her cause; and why should they swell with anger that the temple of religion should be attacked? Experience would inform them that they have better reason to rejoice;

¹ James iii. 17.

since

since her truths will be sure to triumph from examination, and in that triumph to gain larger and firmer ground.

Sacerdotal pride, inflamed by ignorance, has too often injured and disgraced her cause: for when ignorance felt its weakness to defend, it had recourse to pride to come forwards with a volley of anathemas and abuse. How much more becoming the children of Wisdom to say, ‘ Come on ye champions of Herefy and Infidelity, put on your best-proved armour and meet us fairly in the field. Ye shall be generously and kindly treated. We will fight you upon equal terms, and that for the sake of truth and charity, not of victory and triumph. The subject of this amicable contest is some part of Theology, take which you will; and we desire no other conditions than those which providence and the nature of the question have made common to us and you. Together we will examine theological truths on theological principles, as we would do natural phenomena on physical experiments. We will reason together fairly and logically, that is in the method these principles prescribe; and

and together embrace the conviction that results. The terms are not of our making; we take them as we find them: Neither shall they be of yours. But, if ye will contend only on those which ye make yourselves, all that we can do is to say, that we are sorry ye put it out of our power to meet you, by flying from this fair and open ground; for should we follow you to contend on your own partial and private ground, error and confusion, not truth and conviction, will attend the contest. That ye remain under the dominion of Errors is, therefore, entirely your own fault. They are, we suppose, the effect of habit, which may in other cases be essential to much virtue, but which, in the case of Religion, is unfortunately the cause of hurtful prejudices. We would endeavour to soften and remove these prejudices, by giving you enlarged and comparative views of things, and to discover to you the causes of your errors and mistakes: and, if our endeavours should not have the desired success, we would only exhort you to live good lives, and to be as virtuous as ye can, (which is in all respects the best antidote to Error), and we

we will hope and pray, that the God we serve will of his goodness forgive the effects of these prejudices, and that he will have a reserve in his infinite mercy to reach unto you.'

An excellent Prelate, whose learning and virtues do honour to this age in which he lives, in his zeal for moderation, thinks it an act of wisdom, 'to shew condescension to
' the very prejudices and humours of men ;'
and is also of opinion that ' their Errors may
' sometimes be removed by arguing with them
' on their own *mistaken Principles*.' To this one act of his condescension the author of these lectures cannot consistently subscribe, as it is diametrically opposite to the whole scope and tenor of this work, and has been stated as a principal cause of Error. In all other points his Lordship's condescension and moderation do equal honour to his heart and understanding. ' The Errors of men,' he goes on, ' may sometimes be removed by
' allowing all that truth and reason will warrant to their opinions ; by putting the fairest
' construction upon their designs, instead of
' fiercely declaiming against them ; above all,
' by testifying a sincere disposition to advance
' Truth

‘ Truth and Goodness without any indirect
 ‘ views to our own interest. Or, were all
 ‘ other considerations out of the case, we
 ‘ could never be excused from proceeding in
 ‘ the way of gentleness and civility, from
 ‘ treating them with due respect, and ex-
 ‘ pressing the sincerest good-will to their *per-*
 ‘ *sons*. Be their *moral* and *religious* defects
 ‘ what they will, we should hardly be *wise*,
 ‘ if we reprov’d with bitterness, advis’d
 ‘ with insolence, and condemn’d with pas-
 ‘ sion. In all addresses to mistaken and bad
 ‘ men, where our purpose is to inform or
 ‘ amend them, the gentlest applications are
 ‘ surely the best, because these excite no pas-
 ‘ sion to counteract their virtue ^m.’

Thus I have executed, to the utmost of
 my power, the first part of this new Logic,
 or general Investigation of Truth and Error,
 and given a Prospect of the other two: and,
 though I acknowledge myself under great
 obligations to different writers and philoso-
 phers, particularly the two champions of

^m Hurd, 2 Vol. 2 Serm.

learning, Aristotle and Bacon, I have exercised the privilege of an author, by submitting their doctrines to the examination of my own judgment; making myself solely and properly responsible for the whole. And, if I have been too bold and too much self-directed in the exercise of this privilege, to say that I am sorry for it, is what I deem a very weak and insufficient apology. The best amends that I can make to the authors I have injured, and to the public, will be to solicit, as I do, the fair examination of all scholars and philosophers, and to promise, as I will, to retract, to change, to correct, and to improve any or every part upon fair conviction. Sensible, as I fully am, of the many faults and imperfections which must have overtaken me in my various and extensive walk, and professing, as I sincerely do, that the improvement of sound learning is not only the reigning motive, but the sole object, of my heart, I have to request of the *Few* who shall do these volumes the honour of a perusal, (for, from the nature of the work, it neither expects nor hopes for *many* readers,) that, with a free and independent mind, they will read with care

and judge with candour; and no one will, I hope, have reason to complain of the tenacity or disingenuity of their author. And, should this humble essay, which I presume to call a NEW LOGIC, have the single good fortune to lead men, who are sons of science, *to think and to judge for themselves, and not in the thoughts and opinions of others*: this one effect, by opening the door to that sound improvement, will be more than a sufficient reward of all my labour.

Now to You, my benevolent and learned auditors, for the patience and attention with which I have been indulged, may my tribute of love and gratitude be duly paid: and to Him, whose gracious goodness hath enabled me, with whatever ability, to execute this part of my intended plan, to whose honour and service it is more especially dedicated, “ who is of power to establish you
 “ according to the Gospel of the Evangelists
 “ and Apostles, and the preaching of Jesus
 “ Christ, according to the revelation of the
 “ mystery which was kept secret since the
 “ world

324 *The Chart and Scale, &c.*

“ world began, but now is made manifest
“ by the Scriptures of the prophets, and,
“ according to the commandment of the
“ eternal God, made known to all nations for
“ the obedience of faith ; to God only wise
“ be glory through Jesus Christ for ever.
“ Amen ⁿ.”

• Rom. xvi. 26, 27.

THE END.

